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INDEX

TO

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XXX.

	PAGE
Estheticism and Ethicism—By Principal Kamakhya	
Nath Mitra, M.A.	203
America, What we can learn from—By Swami	
Bodhananda	124
Apostles of Abhayam or Fearlessness, The Latest—	
By Surendra Nath Chakravarty, M.A. ...	166
Birthday Celebrations	528
Bhakti or Life in the Vision Beautiful—By T. L.	
Vaswani	216
Buddhism, The Birth of—By Haripada Ghosal,	
Vidyabenode, M.A., M.R.A.S.	211
Concentration, The Art of—By Swami Prabhava-	
nanda	458
Co-operation and Social Reform	416
Country needs most, What the—By “An Aggrieved”	223
Dear to the Lord—By Brahmachari Sura Chaitanya	64
Egoism, The Dilemma of—By Swami Pavitrانanda	467
God’s Hand—By S. A.	502, 557
Good and Evil, The Problem of—By Adhar Chandra	
Das	412
Hindu Mahasabha, The	226
Hinduism	29
Hinduism and Swami Dayananda, The Revival of	254, 303
Humanity, The Progress of—By Swami Pavitrانanda	395
India, The Economic History of Ancient—By Swami	
Pavitrانanda	275
India, The Foreign Propaganda for—By Dr. Bhupen-	
dra Nath Dutta, M.A., Ph.D.	507

	PAGE
Indian National Movement, The—By Swami Adwaitananda	491, 548
Indian Womanhood in the Accounts of Greek Writers—By Haripada Ghosal, Vidyabenode, M.A., M.R.A.S.	496
Inner Awakening—By Swami Prabhavananda ...	76
Jesus, The Boy—By a Hindu	18
Luther at Worms—By Brahmachari Kumar Chaitanya	219
Mahatma Gandhi—By an Admirer	550
Mammon and Marriage	322
Man <i>versus</i> State	38
Mayavati Charitable Dispensary	288, 434
Mayavati Charitable Dispensary, The Twenty-first Annual Report of the	330
Meennath and Gorakhnath—By Swami Atulananda	403
Misery, Beyond the Shadows of—By Swami Pra- bhavananda	349
Mother's Play, Mystery of—By Swami Trigunatita	463
Mysticism—By "Digamma"	262
News and Notes—43, 93, 142, 188, 237, 284, 332, 377, 426, 477, 523, 568	
Occasional Notes—5, 56, 103, 152, 195, 244, 292, 340, 387, 436, 484, 533	
Parijata Flower, The—By Swami Atulananda ...	358
Past and the Present, The—By Eric Hammond ...	312
Peace, The Way of Universal—By Swami Govinda- nanda	128
Pestalozzi and Indian Education—By Nivedita of Rk.—V.	441
Practical Vedanta—By Swami Sharvananda ...	542
Predestined Forces of the Future, The—By Swami Adwaitananda	298
Ramakrishna and Universal Brotherhood, Sri—By K. N. Dave	172
Ramakrishna and World-Peace, Sri—By "Bhargava"	160
Ramakrishna Mission Educational Institutions ...	427
Ramakrishna, The Ninetieth Birthday Celebration of Sri	184, 257
Religious Movement of India, A Chapter in the— By Mani Bhushan Mazumdar, M.A., B.L.	70, 11

	PAGE
Reports and Appeals	375, 520, 564
Reviews and Notices 41, 88, 232, 329, 372, 475,	518
Page, To a—By Jules Bois	97
Sarat Sundari of Puthia, Maharani—By An	
Admirer	268, 315
Shanti Ashrama, Summer Yoga class at the—By	
Western disciples	514
Social Reform in India, The—By a Hindu ...	82
Spirituality and Activity—By Swami Yatiswarananda	13
Spiritual Unfoldment—By Swami Nikhilananda ...	409
Sri Krishna and Uddhava 35, 84, 131, 181, 229, 280, 324,	
368, 419, 471, 510, 561	
Turiyananda at Benares, Talks with Swami 193, 241,	
289, 337, 385, 433, 481, 529	
Turiyananda at Kankhal, With Swami—By Swami	
Atulananda	98, 145
Turiyananda at Kurukshetra, With Swami—By	
Swami Atulananda	49
Turiyananda in the Shanti Ashrama, U. S. A., Last	
days with Swami—By Swami Atulananda ...	1
Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, Swami—By	
"Sudama"	110
Vivekananda—Some Impressions, Swami—By a	
Devotee	449
Vivekananda—The Sixty-third Birthday Celebration	
of Swami	136
White Man's Burden, The	363
Yoga—By Swami Adwaitananda	354

Prabuddha Bharata

समिष्ठ जायत



प्राप्य बरात्रिबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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LAST DAYS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA IN THE SHANTI ASHRAMA, U. S. A.

Swami Turiyananda had been in the Shanti Ashrama about a year and a half. He took his work seriously, and the mental strain of the constant teaching and training of many disciples of different temperaments and strong pre-conceived ideas, had been great. His nervous system became affected, and his health broke down. It became evident that he needed a change and rest.

On more than one occasion the Swami had expressed his ardent desire to see his beloved brother-disciple, Swami Vivekananda again. It was therefore decided to offer him a first class passage for India, in the hope that the long sea-voyage and his meeting with Swamiji would have a beneficial effect on his health, and he would come back to us with renewed zeal and strength. The offer was accepted, and the date of sailing fixed.

During the remaining days he suffered repeatedly from nervous depression. But at intervals he became himself again, full of power and spiritual zeal, when he would talk constantly of the Divine Mother, of Sri Ramakrishna and of Swamiji.

Physical weakness never in the least clouded his mind. "It is only nerves," he said to me repeatedly, "my mind is as clear and strong as ever. I need rest now, and after seeing Swamiji, I will come back."

One evening, just after dusk, when I entered the little cabin we shared together, the Swami told me of a vision he had had. The Divine Mother had come to him and had asked him to remain in the Ashrama. But he had refused. Then She told him that if he stayed in the Ashrama the work would grow rapidly, and many beautiful buildings would be erected. Still he had refused. At last She showed him the place full of disciples. "Let me go to Swamiji first," he had said. And the Mother with grave countenance vanished from his sight.*

The vision had left him unhappy and disturbed in mind. "I have done wrong," he said with a sigh, "but it cannot be helped now." A few days later he started for San Francisco.

On the last morning, while I was busily engaged arranging for his departure, the Swami sent for me. As I entered the cabin, I found him seated on the floor as usual. He looked serene. Motioning me to be seated opposite him, he said in a very sweet voice, "Gurudasa,* I have made this Ashrama for you; live here happily."

* It will be remembered that Swami Vivekananda had passed away before Swami Turiyananda reached India.

* Subsequently Swami Atulananda.—Ed., P. B.

After a few moments of thoughtful silence, he added, "and for those who want to live here as Mother's children. I leave you in full charge. I have told you everything. I have kept nothing hidden from you. I have told you the most secret thoughts of my mind. You have seen how I have lived here. Now try to do the same."

"But that is impossible, Swami," I interposed.

Looking at me very tenderly, the Swami said, "Depend on Mother for everything. Trust in Her, and She will guide you. She will not let you go astray. I am sure of that. One thing remember,—never boss any one. Look upon all alike, treat all alike. No favourites. Hear all, and be just."

"Swami, I will try. But it is a great responsibility," I said.

"Why should you feel responsibility?" the Swami questioned. "Mother alone is responsible. You have devoted your life to Her service. What have you to fear? Only be sincere, and remember Her always."

Then he began to chant, *Om, Om, Om*, his body rocking to and fro with the rhythm of the chant. After a few moments he suddenly stopped, and straightening himself said with great force, "Control your passions, anger, jealousy, pride. And never speak ill of others behind their backs. Let everything be open and free. When anything has to be done, always be the first to do it. Others will follow. But unless you do first, no one will do. You know how I have done all kinds of physical work here, only for that reason."

"But what about the classes, Swami? What shall I teach? I am a student myself."

“Don’t you know yet, my boy, that it is life that counts? Life creates life. Serve! Serve! Serve! That is the greatest teaching. Be humble! Be the servant of all! Only he who knows how to serve is fit to rule. But you have studied many years; teach what you know. As you give out, so you will receive.”

“Swami,” I ventured, “when you are gone we will be like sheep without a shepherd.”

“But I will be with you in spirit,” he said solemnly.

Then the carriage was ready, and the Swami was called away. Placing his hand upon my head, he blessed me. “You are Mother’s, and Mother is yours,” were his last words. His eyes were moist, and I turned away to hide my own emotions. Silently he left the room.

The little cabin where we had lived so happily together felt empty, so empty. I lingered a few moments, heavy at heart. When I stepped outside, a cloud of dust in the distance indicated his departure. I stood watching with straining eyes for a last glimpse of the vehicle as it moved slowly over the winding, climbing mountain road. At the last turn of the road the carriage halted, and I knew that a prayer went forth across the distance, a prayer for those whom he had left behind.

With a sad heart I returned to the cabin, and when I entered I felt a presence, a solacing presence that filled the room with peace. It acted as a balm to my aching heart.

When I went back to my companions I told them that he who had left us was still with us. And I repeated to them the Swami’s promise, “I will be with you in spirit.”

SWAMI ATULANANDA.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The Prabuddha Bharata now enters on its thirtieth year. On such an occasion as this, our hearts are filled with prayer, and we offer our most humble salutation to the Supreme Ruler of the universe. May His Divine grace and blessings be upon us. May he vouchsafe unto us strength, faith and love. Besides, we have got another pleasant duty to perform on this occasion. To all our friends, sympathisers and helpers all over the world, our sincere and hearty thanks are due for the encouragement and co-operation we have received from them. To one and all of them and to men and women of different nationalities and races with whom we are one as human beings, go forth our cordial greetings, and we wish them all a most happy and prosperous New Year.



Standing on the threshold of a new epoch in the history of our humble undertaking, our imagination instinctively runs back to the beginning, and our mind desires to dwell upon the retrospective vision that comes before it. The Prabuddha Bharata has always had as its end and aim to work for fulfilment of the mission of the great Swami Vivekananda, which is to spread broadcast his bold and helpful message, as embodied in the universal, synthetic principles of the Vedanta, to India and to the world at large, irrespective of class, creed, colour and race. It is needless to reiterate at this stage the details of this mission and message. It is, in one word, the realisation of our true nature—the Atman and the good of the world, आत्मनो मोक्षार्थं जगद्धिनाय च, as Swamiji used to say. It is nearly a quarter of a century

since Swamiji left this physical plane of existence, and the results of his many-sided activities achieved so far are not discouraging. They are rather hopeful and promising. India, once in the grip of a great calamity, has now been able to make herself free, to some extent, by her continued struggles and self-assertion. The bewitching enchantment of an extraneous materialistic civilisation that was once going to overpower her, is gradually losing its influence, and she is awaking to a consciousness of her past heritage and future mission. The world at large, too, rudely shocked in its self-complacent mood, has begun to ask for *that* which alone can bring her rest and happiness.



If we study the present state of things and look ahead at the future, what may be said of the prospect may not appear at first sight very hopeful. The communal squabbles, the religious feuds and riots, the clash of the petty provincial claims and interests and the almost hopeless diversity and dissension in political and social matters—these and other similar difficulties strike even the most casual observer. The world, even after the great cataclysm, seems to have learnt no useful lesson. The economic war and the struggle for mandates and markets over the less powerful and subject nations, the cult of racial superiority with its corollary of cultural conquest, the race for the increase of armaments and such other phenomena reveal the inner motives and considerations which seem to guide the international policy of the world. Even after the War to end all wars, we are in a state which may be described as “armed peace.” Even in

the internal affairs of each nation, the picture that comes before our eyes is no brighter. The greed for material possessions, the war of the classes, abject poverty by the side of superabundant wealth and luxury and the like are still there. The countries which profess to be the most democratic in their ideals, as some one wittily observes, swear by liberty and equality coupled with the prudence to practise neither.

This is indeed a gloomy picture, and it has nowadays become almost a fashion to paint such pictures by exaggerating the evils too much. Nor are we like those who shut their eyes to difficulties and obstacles and delude themselves, living in a fool's paradise. Our invincible faith in the providential ordering of the universe and the possibility of human evolution, far from discouraging us, rather stimulates us to redouble our exertions and enter the ranks with never-failing hope and unconquerable will, so that we may fight out the evils. Thinkers all the world over, whose vision is not clouded by prejudice, and who will not sell their conscience for power or pelf, and who dare to stand alone for truth, justice and righteousness, are growing in number. It is a happy sign, no doubt. And they are feeling that in the name of efficiency, progress and culture, the supreme claims of the moral and spiritual personality of man are being ruthlessly sacrificed. They are feeling an irrepressible call from within to raise a voice of protest against the blind, mad chase after the will o' the wisp of the so-called scientific advancement, and they are doing what they can to open the eyes of their fellow-men to the

indescribable beauties of peace and good-will. Our respect goes to such heroic and saintly souls; and we have no doubt that their labour of love, even if discounted and ridiculed by the vulgar crowd, is worth much in the eyes of God and cannot go unrewarded.

For our own part, if we have made any reference at all to the dark side of the present state of things, it is not to criticise but solely with a view to explore the root-causes of the disease and attempt to discover the suitable remedy. Broadly speaking, all the trouble of the world outside is due to a rank materialistic outlook in the various departments of life. The pursuit of wealth and happiness, a perfectly legitimate aspiration, when sought after without the qualifications that are essential to them, not only stultifies itself, but also produces results that are disastrous. The considerations which should regulate the desire for the acquisition of wealth and for enjoyment, are that the indulgence in any of them should not be detrimental to the highest spiritual growth of man. It is because wealth and enjoyment are desired, not as the means towards a supreme goal, but as ends in themselves that we have so much evil and suffering. None should think that we are against scientific research, invention and progress. On the contrary, we are great advocates of them all, if they are carried within reasonable limits. We have no objection to any individual having his proper share in the good things of the world. Only, as the Hindu scriptures would put it, "Wealth (अर्थ) and enjoyment (काम) should be sought after and gained through

the moral and righteous ways (धर्म), leading ultimately to the supreme goal of life which is freedom (मोक्ष).”

* * *

Granted this ideal would be most satisfying to the extent to which it is realised in practice, we are no nearer to the solution. For, it is always an easy matter to determine and choose any particular rule of conduct, but when we consider the details of its application in our everyday life, all differences, disputes and difficulties make their appearance, and they must be faced. We do not pretend to possess any cut and dried scheme by the application of which all the troubles of the world can be removed. Nor is it within the powers of any single individual, however exalted and wise he may be, to do so. The problem has to be solved and can only be solved by the united efforts of the best minds of each country and nationality. Let them all come together and work out the details in a manner best suited to the peculiar circumstances and environments of their own country. We can only indicate what will be the consequences, if the ideal of conduct furnished above governs the actions of men in the various spheres of life.

It has been pointed out by some that modern science and its inventions of huge and powerful machines have done more harm than good. They have standardised life and spoilt individuality; they have outraged the finer sentiments of love and beauty; above all they have robbed peace and happiness from the earth by generating an inordinate craze for more wealth and greater comfort. Individuals and nations have fallen from the higher ideals

of life, and they are being helplessly drifted along the current like a straw in a rushing stream. They do not know whither they are going. A shrewd writer very aptly describes this age when he defines what is meant by being civilised in these days. "It does not matter," says he, "how much you possess. To be civilised is to try to get more and still more." Such a greed—such a desire for more and more possessions, can have only one consequence. It will spell disaster and ruin to humanity. By it, millions of people who are less fortunate and are weak, will be systematically denied their legitimate rights, civil and political. Not only this, but they will also be deprived of the opportunities for self-development to which every human being has a claim. The disappearance of all such evils will be one of the consequences of the new world-order.

In the sphere of government which ranks next in importance to the economic and material concerns of a country, we shall briefly examine what changes would result on the acceptance of the new ideal. In international relations, the leading countries of the modern world, whatever be their type of government, do not represent the real soul of the nation. As Principal L. P. Jacks describes—"As trustee for the nation's power, possessions, territory and former conquests, as guardian of its unitary traditions, as protector of its sovereign rights against infringement by other nations similarly organized, each of these Western governments, whether democratic or otherwise, stands for combative nationalism." In this capa-

city it walks abroad among its foreign neighbours, with armies and navies at its back, sometimes hiding them as much as possible, sometimes displaying them with considerable truculence. All this will give place to a new relationship which will consist of sympathy, helpfulness and readiness to forego self-interest in order to promote the welfare and happiness of the people and of the world as a whole. That is to say the civilisation of the present day will be only saved by the redemption of its spiritual nature.

However strong and powerful a civilisation may appear, judged from purely physical and material standards, it is doomed to destruction when it starves the moral and spiritual needs of individuals. This is exactly the case with the aggressive civilisation of the modern West. Realising this imminent danger, the Swami Vivekananda preached to the world the Vedantic ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature. This is what he said about this ideal—"This wonderful ideal of the sameness and omnipresence of the Supreme Soul has to be preached for the amelioration and elevation of the human race, here as elsewhere. Wherever there is evil and wherever there is ignorance and want of knowledge, I have found out by experience that all evil comes, as our scriptures say, by relying upon differences, and that all good comes from faith in equality, in the underlying sameness and oneness of things." How much importance he attached to this noble principle of the Vedanta will be evident from the following. Says he—"Aye, if there is

anything in the Gita that I like, it is these two verses coming out as the very gist, the very essence, of Krishna's teachings : 'He who sees the Supreme Lord dwelling alike in all beings, the Imperishable in things that perish, he sees indeed. For, seeing the Lord as the same, everywhere present, he does not destroy the self by the self, and thus he goes to the Highest Goal.' "



Great souls in each country always realise this need for enthroning in the hearts of the people the moral and spiritual ideals. So far, the number of such men is few and far between, and their influence upon the policies of their respective nations is little or nothing. The nations, although they have been brought closely together in physical and geographical relations, have not yet forgotten in their dealings with others their suspicion and warlike attitude of the bygone centuries. The progress of science has made isolation of every kind, individual or collective, impossible nowadays ; and if the catastrophe of a universal suicide is to be prevented, the whole world would have to be governed by rules of conduct which we find in the ideal of the joint-family system. This may sound too Utopian at the present day, but there is no half-way house possible. The dreams of the poets about the Parliament of Man and the Federation of Humanity must, in some measure, be actualised for the establishment of any civilisation in the future. In the words of the final benediction sung on all occasions by the Hindus, let us pray—
"May good betide all people, and may all sovereigns rule the earth in the righteous path ! May prosperity reign over the land for the benefit of all creatures (cows,

Brahmins, etc.), and may all worlds prosper in peace and plenty !”

स्वस्ति प्रजाभ्यः परिपालयन्तां
 नाथ्येन मार्गेण मद्दौ मद्दौशाः ।
 गोब्राह्मणेभ्यः शुभमस्तु नित्यं
 लोकास्समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु ॥

SPIRITUALITY AND ACTIVITY.

BY SWAMI YATISWARANANDA.

For the speedy attainment of the summum bonum of our life, it is absolutely necessary for us not only to form a clear conception of the ultimate goal, but also to know definitely what particular course of action is calculated to lead us to its realisation. An ideal becomes no better than a wild fancy unless we follow the proper path that is sure to help us to realise it sooner or later. Again, when we lose sight of the goal, our activities cannot but become aimless and even misdirected, and make us wander farther and farther from our life's destination. This is what is happening every day in our individual and communal life. Practice does not conform to the ideal. This is the root-cause of most of our troubles both in the East as well as in the West.

In spite of her terrible sufferings and trials, India is still the home of religion and spirituality. She is still the mother of prophets. Rightly does Mr. William Digby observe in his remarkable book—Prosperous British India —“Ram Mohan Roy, Keshub Chunder Sen, Ramakrishna, Bengalis to a man, to mention spiritual workers only who have passed away, are known everywhere and.....are honoured, as amongst humanity's noblest spiritual teachers.....During the last century the first fruit of British intellectual eminence was, probably, to be found in

Robert Browning and John Ruskin. Yet they are mere gropers in the dark compared with the uncultured and illiterate Ramakrishna of Bengal, who knowing naught of what we term 'learning', spoke as no other man of his age spoke, and revealed God to weary mortals". All this is true. But it is in India again that in the name of religion millions of people are living a life of apathy and laziness. While aiming to live a life of other-worldliness, they are following the path of morbid inactivity, and are sinking lower and lower into appalling inertness and ignorance. This is far worse than a life of worldliness, which at least entails a certain amount of activity, and this sometimes of a strenuous nature.

When we turn our eyes to the Occident—the land of "activity and progress"—there, too, we do not find a very encouraging state of affairs. The achieving West has no doubt produced many men of science and inventive genius, and their life-long labours have tended to mitigate human sufferings, and have brought education, sanitation, health and comfort to the doors of millions. But it is also true at the same time that in the mad rush "to squeeze the orange of the world dry in the shortest possible time," the Westerners are losing, and as a matter of fact have already lost, much of their life's leisureliness and peacefulness. And not only this. On the plea of spreading the light of civilisation and culture and thereby making the world better, they have developed a form of militarism which threatens not only to destroy the peace of the non-European races, but also to exterminate the white nations themselves. Their religion has in most cases become only a pretence for gaining territorial expansion and material prosperity. In India the spiritual mood seems to lapse into indolence, weakness and slavishness. In the West the active temperament tends to lead to restlessness, militarism and aggression. The result is that the true spirit of religion—the one thing needful—seems to ship away in the midst of both the extremes—apathy and restlessness. What then is the remedy?

The morbid desire to reach the highest ideal all at

once, whether one has got the necessary capacity and qualification or not, is responsible to no small extent for many of our troubles in the various spheres of life. It is true that we must never lose sight of the ideal. But we must know at the same time that we are to pass through a number of preparatory stages, through periods of strenuous physical and mental training and discipline before we can hope to live the highest ideal of inward stillness and meditation. Many of the so-called religious men mar their career and also bring discredit to the noble name of religion simply because they unwisely violate this first law of spiritual life. The Hindu scriptures are quite explicit on the point. Says the Gita—"For the man of meditation wishing to attain purification of heart leading to concentration, work is said to be the means. For him when he has attained such concentration, *inaction* is said to be the way. He whose intellect is unattached everywhere—he who has subdued his heart—he whose desires have fled, attains to the supreme perfection, consisting of freedom of action by renunciation." The authors of the ancient Hindu social system never lost sight of this ideal, and that is why they inculcated the Ashrama Dharma—the duties and responsibilities to be fulfilled in the different stages of life. Owing to the changed circumstances, it may now be necessary to change the non-essentials to some extent, but the old principles hold good in our present condition as strongly as ever.

Activity is inborn in every being. Swayed by his tendencies, or drawn by the siren voices of the world, as some would like to put it, man is engaging himself in various kinds of work, good, bad or indifferent. He wants to live what he thinks to be a brighter and fuller life, to enjoy to his heart's content the gifts of Providence. And in doing this he does not hesitate to tyrannise over the weaker and less fortunate of his fellow-men. In the scrambling for power and enjoyment that ensues, mutual hatred and jealousy, aggression and exploitation, horrible machines for the destruction of human life and property come to play their ignoble part. Wars and massacres,

starvation and famine, and other forms of horror follow as a matter of course. This is the picture we find in most of the Western countries, and in other parts of the world dominated by the Western nations. Christianity is the religion of the members of the white race, but these people with some individual exceptions are little influenced in their life and thought by its tenets. Most of them have made, in the words of a Western writer, "the pretence of the profession of ideals an acquittal to act even remotely in accordance with them." "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you"—says Christ. But his followers are mad after founding their kingdoms and empires in the material world, and this even by means of the bloodshed and slaughter of the innocent. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—declares Jesus. But the Christian nations are scrambling for world-hegemony, even at the risk of suffering the loss of their soul. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"—is one of the precepts of the Prophet of Nazareth. But the so-called Christian powers never care to practise it even in their dealings with one another, far less with the Oriental nations. They have proved by their action that to be meek and remain meek is the surest step to the "disinheritance" of the earth!

The person who is absorbed in Samadhi, and has merged his individuality in the Absolute, may alone be said to have reached the true actionless and perfect state. Of others "verily none can rest even for an instant without performing action, for all are made to act helplessly, indeed, by the Gunas, born of Prakriti. Activity, when understood in its comprehensive sense, is both physical and mental. There are thousands in India who have given up the active life of the world, and are sincerely living the life of strenuous spiritual practice. Against these inwardly active people none should have anything to say. For, they are making the best possible use of their time, and are holding aloft before mankind the highest ideal of life—the realisation of the Divine. There

are others again, who living in the world are leading a life of intense activity, both external and internal, and are attempting to do the greatest good to others as well as to themselves in various spheres of life. Both the above mentioned types of men, whether they follow the path of meditation or work or both are the salt of the earth, and are really helping to make the world better than what it is now. They are following paths which will ultimately lead them to the state where "all knots of the heart are cut asunder, all doubts are solved, and all Karmas cease to exist."

But those who are trying to avoid work as the source of all evil, and "restraining the organs of action sit, revolving in the mind thoughts regarding the objects of the senses," are only forging fresh fetters for their soul. Such is also the case with those who are allowing their activities to be swayed by their passions, and are madly following the path of worldly enjoyment, regardless of the sufferings and miseries of others. To them the Gita preaches the Karma Yoga in the following terms—"Without performing work none reaches worklessness; by merely giving up action no one attains to perfection. Do thou always perform actions which are obligatory, without attachment; by performing action unattached one attains to the highest." Action by itself is not an evil. It becomes so when it is not performed in the right spirit, and is made a means to self-aggrandisement and sense-gratification. But when it is brought under the regulative influence of higher ideals as furnished by religion, it becomes a potent instrument for freeing man from the shackles of ignorance, and thereby bringing to him undying peace and blessedness.

The whole secret of Karma Yoga lies in the word "non-attachment". This Yoga aims to bring freedom to man through work done without any thought of self. According to it, the path to perfection lies through intense activity. But this activity must be selfless. Then only can it purify the mind, and when this is done the glory of the Atman shines forth in all its splendour. And

the person who is blessed with the glorious vision realises his true Self and reaches perfect freedom even in this very life. Therefore does the Gita declare—"Being steadfast in Yoga, perform actions, abandoning attachment, remaining unconcerned as regards success and failure. This evenness of mind (in regard to success and failure) is known as Yoga."

Whether in the East or in the West, the crying need of the times is to combine spirituality with activity, and so direct all human strivings that they may ultimately lead man to the destined goal. To bring about this much-desired state of affairs, thus did Swami Vivekananda suggest—"In India, the quality of Rajas is almost absent ; the same is the case with Sattva in the West. It is certain, therefore, that the real life of the Western world depends upon the influx, from India, of the current of Sattva or transcendentalism ; and it is also certain that unless we overpower and submerge our Tamas by the opposite tide of Rajas, we shall never gain any worldly good or welfare in this life ; and it is also equally certain that we shall meet many formidable obstacles in the path of realisation of those noble aspirations and ideals connected with our after-life." Only a few thoughtful men and women of different countries are now able to recognise the union and intermingling of the two forces of spirituality and activity. But the sooner the hulk of mankind come to realise this urgent need the better for the world and the human race.

THE BOY JESUS.*

By a Hindu.

Nineteen centuries and twenty-four years have sped by since Jesus, the Christ, came on earth—the first-born son of a modest, Jewish couple, Mary and Joseph, of the

* A Christmas sermon.

carpenter class. And his birthplace was an empty stable in the insignificant, little town of Bethlehem, eighty miles from his parental home at Nazareth.

An humbler birth can hardly be imagined. The circumstances were almost pathetic. A married girl, only thirteen years old, heavy with child, travelling all that distance on an ass, then sinking down spent and weary on a heap of straw hastily gathered by her husband, and giving birth to her first baby. And the child-mother with her own trembling hands wrapping the little mite in swaddling-bands, and placing him in a manger where animals had fed; the anxious father standing by distracted by the thought that he had not been able to find his young bride a more suitable place of lodging.

There was certainly nothing promising about such a birth. And still, after all these years, the world remembers it in a spirit of thanksgiving and rejoicing. A mystery, indeed,—until we come to know and realise who this child really was.

The young mother knew it. And this knowledge gave her strength to bear up under such trying circumstances. Her son was not an ordinary boy, for had she not conceived him when the Divine Breath overshadowed her, before she knew man, when the angel Gabriel appeared before her? And had not the angel comforted her with the assurance that she was chosen by God to bring forth a son who would be a Saviour of the world?

But from the mother's lips we learn little about the child, for she was a modest young woman who kept the secret hidden in her heart. And later, blinded by parental love, she even forgot—as mothers of all world-redeemers have doubted and forgotten—that her child was the Son of God handed over to her in sacred trust.

Mary saw in Jesus only her little son, romping and playing and making merry with other Jewish children of his own class. There was nothing to mark him out from his playmates except perhaps a greater vivacity and sweetness of disposition, and an early tendency to enquire into the nature of things with which he daily came into con-

tact. He was simply a bright, lively child with a receptive mind, eager to learn.

It is not then from the parents but from Jesus' own lips, and from the testimony of his disciples that we come to learn of his divine origin and mission. But let us first trace how this child, born in poverty and raised in simplicity, developed into a world-teacher worshipped by millions to-day.

Jesus' education in the village school was very meagre. He was taught the lessons of the scriptures and reading and writing in the vernacular. And at home he learned of the goodness and greatness of God as revealed in His law, and shown in the history of Israel. His mind was never burdened with Rabbinical education which gave so much attention to ceremony and externals, leaving the student no time for quiet hours to spend with God or to listen to the voice speaking to the heart, sources from which Jesus derived his wisdom and inspiration. Jesus' mind was never cramped by what was then regarded as superior education but which was really only a hindrance to real development. His powers and perfection of character were developed by contact with common folk—cultivators and craftsmen—by performance of his home duties, obedience to his parents, study of the scriptures and long, lonely walks and pensive moods in the wooded hills of Nazareth. He tried to understand the reason of things, and from the surroundings of his daily life he gathered worldly knowledge as well as spiritual insight.

From early youth he had a great love for nature. Plant life and animal life aroused his curiosity and made him ponder over the mystery of existence. And as he opened his young heart to the influence of nature, as he watched the sun rise and set, the moving clouds and the starry skies, flashes of illumination would quicken his eager mind and draw him to the Creator whose mighty power and brooding care for His creatures became so obvious to him. That Creator supported and nourished all life, high and low, keeping order in the universe

through His inscrutable laws, sending rain and sunshine to nourish the earth, and wind and storm to purify the atmosphere, the day and night to give opportunity for occupation and rest, and the seasons for plants and trees to grow and blossom and multiply and gather strength for the coming seasons. Jesus saw that God had provided food for all, procurable with little effort so long as wants were few and simple.

As he brooded over these things, the boy began to realise that God was a living Presence—a Presence he could feel and commune with, that responded to all the deepest thoughts and feelings of his yearning heart. It was as if a great, loving, invisible Father was always near him, a Father ever so much more wise and responsive than his natural father who often misunderstood him.

In the presence of his Heavenly Father, as Jesus called Him, the boy felt infinitely happy, and then the world with all its cares and ambitions seemed so far removed from him. That Father would deal with him so sweetly and tenderly that he marvelled at it. He would solve all his problems that man could not solve, through a silent voice operating in his heart. And sometimes that voice would call to him pleadingly: "My boy, open your heart to Me, give yourself entirely to Me, be not over-anxious about worldly things, for I know what you stand in need of. Come to Me with all your little burdens, and I will lift them off you. Trust in Me and keep close to Me, and I will teach you and make you happy with a happiness the world cannot give." Then the boy would be filled with ecstasy.

Sometimes a divine light seemed to envelop and permeate him, and he felt so free and buoyant that he could hardly contain himself. He seemed to be walking on air. And when he returned to the cottage where his mother would be awaiting him, he would confide to her his wonderful experiences. And Mary looking at the boy's face would discern a brightness and beauty of expression not usually present there.

~~Thus, alone with~~ nature, in the lonely hills of
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Nazareth, was established in Jesus' youthful heart his relationship with God as Father and son. And during this early period were formulated in his receptive mind those lessons from nature which later he gave out in sayings and parables. Jesus' teachings to the multitudes were object-lessons taken from his immediate surroundings and life as he met it from day to day, always pointing to God as a living, active, conscious Power worthy of man's entire devotion and confidence—a protecting, guiding, loving Power that fills all our wants, spiritual and mundane.

So far, Jesus' faith was a simple faith. But it was a living, quickening faith that expressed itself in the boy's life. As he grew up, his understanding broadened with greater visions and deeper realisations. His relationship with God became closer and more intimate, till at last all distinction vanished, and his soul mingling with the Source of all being he perceived his oneness with God. But of this later.

We must not suppose that the boy lived far removed from all temptations, for Nazareth was notorious for its wickedness. But he kept himself aloof from everything that was unclean that he might preserve his purity of mind.

Jesus' parents were poor and dependent upon their daily toil. And the boy faithfully and cheerfully did his share in bearing the burdens of the household. He learned his father's trade, and in the simple garb of a carpenter youth, he performed his humble tasks. His parents taught him that it was man's duty to be industrious and to do his work with exactness and thoroughness, and that such labour was honourable.

Thus, cheerfully Jesus spent his days often expressing the gladness of his heart by singing psalms and devotional songs, bringing gladness to all who heard him. So sweet and sympathetic was he towards all that every one felt happier in his presence, and he was a welcome guest in every home.

Now, when Jesus was twelve years old, his parents

took him with them to Jerusalem to attend the annual feast of the Passover. From every part of Palestine the worshippers came in great numbers. They travelled in large companies for companionship and protection. The journey from Nazareth occupied several days. It was spring-time, the air was mild and the country bright with flowers. All along the way were spots memorable in the history of Israel, and fathers and mothers told the children of the wonders that God had wrought for His people in ages past. There was song and music on the way. And when, at last, the towers of Jerusalem came in sight, every voice joined in the triumphant strain—"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." It was all new and wonderful to Jesus, and it thrilled him. He felt intensely happy.

We must remember that among the Jews the twelfth year was the dividing line between childhood and youth. On completing this year a Hebrew boy was called a son of the law, and he was given special religious instructions, and was expected to participate in the sacred feasts and observances. It was in accordance with this custom that the parents had taken the boy with them. On this feast all the men of Israel were commanded to appear before the Lord in the temple at Jerusalem. It was therefore a significant period in Jesus' life, and he felt it. He was filled with joy and expectation.

At last they entered the great city. The streets were crowded with strangers. And then for the first time Jesus looked upon the magnificent temple. They entered and stood before the altar: White-robed priests were performing their solemn ministry. On the altar was the bleeding lamb. Great clouds of incense ascended before God. The worshippers bowed their heads in prayer. The service and rites were most impressive. They were symbolic of the birth of the Hebrew nation, and God's dealings with His chosen people. The slain lamb represented the Deliverer of the Jewish race.

Silent and absorbed, the boy looked on. A new light

seemed to dawn on him. Every act he witnessed he felt somehow to be bound up with his own life. New problems flashed before his mind. The mystery of his mission seemed vaguely to open up before him.

The feast lasted seven days. For Jesus these were days of new impressions, new observations, new impulses. He wanted to go everywhere, to see everything. His inquisitive mind left him no peace. He wanted to understand the deeper meaning of the rites and ceremonies, of everything he witnessed. But he got little satisfaction. The observance of the feast had degenerated into formalism. The true significance was lost to the worshippers.

On the last day of the feast Jesus went off by himself once more to visit the temple. He wandered here and there in the precincts, and at last came to a room devoted to a sacred school. Here leading Rabbis were assembled with their pupils. Seating himself quietly at the feet of these grave, learned men, he listened to their instructions.

The Rabbis, noticing the little stranger listening so attentively, began to question him. Jesus' mind, buoyed up by the excitement of the past week, was fully alert. Half-formulated ideas of which he had been only partly conscious took definite shape, and began to flood his mind. He felt inspired. His answers came without a moment's hesitation, mostly by way of quotations from the scriptures.

The Rabbis marvelled. They knew that this Galilean boy had never been instructed in their schools, yet they found him better informed than any of their own students. He seemed to know the scriptures from beginning to end.

At first they felt a little nettled, for the boy expressed positive ideas of his own contrary to their doctrines. But the modesty and grace of Jesus won their hearts. They discerned in him great promise, and they decided to have him as a student that he might become a teacher of Israel. They wanted to take charge of his education, feeling that a mind so quick and original must be brought under their tuition.

As the Rabbis drew him out, Jesus felt new powers awakening within him. His Heavenly Father was ever close and inspired him with new ideas. He respected the learned men, but he found that all their wisdom was turned to worldly ends. They were proud, and they hankered after name and fame. And their teachings were a maze of doctrines, obscuring the simple truths of the word of God.

When he was left alone in the little room that had been assigned to him for the night, Jesus thought deeply about these things. He had no taste for that kind of learning. He hungered for truth that would bring him closer to God. His mind became confused. He was only a boy, and these men were the servants of God. Was he mistaken? Were they right?

He knelt down and prayed: "Father, you alone can teach me. Come, oh Father, speak to me what is true. Lead me in the right path. Give me true wisdom."

Long and earnestly he repeated this prayer during the dark hours of the night. But there was no response. Louder and louder his heart cried out to the living God within him. Then, suddenly light came. He saw a great wave of luminosity. It came rolling in towards him. Then it engulfed him, and he fell into a swoon. But when he came to himself again, a new conviction had been born within his soul. He had heard a voice, a voice as if from afar. The words were familiar to him. Once his mother had told him of the shepherds watching over their flock by night; and how the angel of the Lord had come upon them and had said unto them, "Unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And she had told him how the shepherds had come and had worshipped him when he was a new-born babe in the manger.

But that had only been a story to his child-mind. Now he had heard the same words, "Unto you is born a Saviour." But these words had carried a new significance. With the words had flashed upon him the

knowledge that he himself was that Saviour, the Son of God.

The following day the boy was very thoughtful and reserved. The Rabbis thought that he was tired with all the excitement. They left him in peace. But on the third day he seemed his own self again, quick, original, but a little headstrong for a youth of twelve. All he needed was training, the wise men thought.

Now, meanwhile, Mary and Joseph with hundreds of other pilgrims had set out on their return journey expecting their son to join them at the first halting place. But when Jesus did not turn up, they were greatly perplexed and returned to Jerusalem in search of him. On the third day, at last, they found him at the temple-school.

Rejoiced as they were, the mother rebuked the child. "Son," she said, "why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

Jesus' mind these days had been so completely occupied with higher thoughts that he seemed to live in a different world. He had almost forgotten his parents. Now, suddenly, he was brought down to the level of ordinary life. His parents had come to take him home, to Nazareth, to the little cottage, to the humdrum of every day existence—eating, drinking, working at his trade, the petty cares and ambitions of the world! It came like a shock.

There was a moment of disgust, of revolt; then a deep sigh. Jesus rose to his feet and stood before his mother. Then he remembered the Voice of the night. With face shining, his hand pointing upward, in a voice quivering with emotion, almost pleadingly he uttered the startling words: "How is it that ye sought me? Wish ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

The parents were puzzled. They did not understand. It was the first time that Jesus had declared his relationship with God and his mission on earth. But they were glad to have their son back again, and together they returned to Nazareth.

Jesus took up his trade again, aiding his parents to earn their livelihood, awaiting the appointed time for him to enter upon the work for which he had come to the earth. He was an obedient son, Luke tells us, and he increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man. But here we may add that he did not grow in favour with all men. Jesus' life henceforth was not an easy life.

Of the eighteen years that followed before he began his ministry, we have no record. Still, there is much that we can conjecture. Certain it is that Jesus' life from now on was a life of struggle. Other youngsters had come to share the home at Nazareth. Brothers, they are called. Some of these were not in sympathy with Jesus' ideas. They scoffed and criticised. They called him eccentric and mad. Other boys taunted him about his obscure birth. The Rabbis of Nazareth were not pleased with the youth's independence of spirit. They complained to the parents that he did not conform to the rules laid down by them.

But Jesus kept his peace. He worked out his own problems in secret, alone with nature and his God. And during the nights, when others slept, he lost himself in deep meditations.

Sometimes doubts assailed him and threw him into an abyss of despair. Was he on the right path? Did he not delude himself? Were his visions real, or were they only the fabric of an over-strained mind? Then followed days of terrible agony. And those who saw him pitied him.

His friends tried to console him. They warned him that too much concentration on one idea would destroy his reason. They coaxed him to join them in their amusements. Wise men shook their heads. They took it to be a mental disorder, and brought medicinal herbs to cure the disease. Some suggested marriage as a remedy.

But Jesus knew that no worldly means could bring him relief. Antagonism and well-meant suggestions only drew him closer to his Father, the source of all knowledge and

bliss, who alone could console him. And his struggles were followed by wonderful visions and even higher realisations. He discovered that his Father was not a separate Being but the very Soul of his soul. He found himself to be part of the One Existence, the All-Being.

And at last came the day and the hour when in one great realisation, body and mind were transcended, the world vanished as a dream, all self melted away, and the son of Mary and Joseph experienced that He and the Father were one.

From that moment his home could no longer hold him. He walked out a free man. Once he turned for a last look at the cottage where he had spent thirty years of his life. A jungle creature stood in the path and began to wail. And Jesus thought: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head."

Henceforth he wandered over the land without purse, in a single garb, staff in hand, accepting cheerfully whatever God had ordained for him—he was in the world but not of the world.

Jesus preached the ancient message of Deliverance, the echo of which reverberates after him through all ages. Even to-day we may hear his pleading voice calling to humanity: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

We, Hindus, have our own Chosen Ideals. We may worship God Incarnate in other manifestations, but during Christmas-tide we join with our Christian brethren in the worship of Jesus. Where Jesus' name is spoken we bow our heads in reverence; where his words are recited we listen with eager attention; where his praise is sung we swell the chorus with our voices; where his image is presented we adore, and bending low, with our foreheads gently touch his hallowed feet. In the depths of our hearts we meditate on Jesus, knowing that God is One, but man worships Him in different forms under different names.

'HINDUISM.'*

Numerous books have already been written on Hinduism by people of different tastes, temperaments and outlooks. The subject is so vast and all-comprehensive that it is quite possible for many more books to be written on Hinduism, which may yet possess new features full of interest and instruction. There is nothing in this which may cause wonder. For, if we but turn our attention for a moment to the nature of Hinduism, the explanation becomes self-evident. Hindu religion is not a cut and dry system but a progressive and all-inclusive view of life, in which there is place for the lowest phase of fetishism as well as for the highest flight of philosophical absolutism. It includes innumerable rites, rituals and ceremonies, some of which vary with the different castes : and even within the same caste, different parts of India present widely differing forms. Not only this ; all these forms have undergone very many changes during thousands of years and are undergoing changes even now before our very eyes.

For critical students therefore any attempt to throw fresh light upon the Hindu religion is most helpful. For this reason we accord a hearty welcome to the recent production of Babu Govinda Das of Benares on Hinduism. The author has brought to bear on his work his great erudition, wise experience, keen critical spirit and thorough modern outlook upon life. As such, the book deserves the earnest study of all sections of the Hindus, orthodox or heterodox, reformative or conservative. The book is written with some definite ends in view. "The idea underlying the composition of the book," writes the author, "has been that of the great principle that whatever makes for unification, for sympathy, for expansion, for enlightenment, for toleration, for freedom is to be encouraged: and all that makes against these, that is in fact, separative.

* By Govinda Das. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras
Price, Rs. 3/- Pp. 445 + VII.

destructive, narrowing, productive of hatred and strife, curtails liberty, encourages superstition and credulity is to be discouraged." Excellent idea, no doubt! But the difficulty is that it is not always easy to apply these generalisations to particular cases and pronounce impartial judgments. For, few individuals possess the amount of knowledge necessary for passing judgments upon such intricate details as the caste system, the institution of marriage, and so on; and fewer still have the spirit of detachment and impartiality commanding wide acceptance. 3111/

The author of the book before us has confessedly taken the rôle of an advocate, a very powerful one—we may observe in passing, and as such many aspects and observances of the present day Hindu society have been mercilessly exposed and condemned by him. This feature of the book is both its strong as well as its weak point. Nevertheless, the book has become valuable and interesting for the new light it throws on many of the thorny and obscure sides of Hinduism. Another supreme merit of the book is that it is bound to give a rude, but quite necessary, awakening to the majority of the ignorant Hindus, who are living in a comfortable fools' paradise with regard to many anomalies, excrescences and evils that have gathered round the Hindu society, and are actually clogging the wheels of progress. Another point to be remembered is that the criticisms and remedies suggested by the author (even where they are wrong and unacceptable—such cases are few and far between) are deserving of great respect and attention, as they are neither the mischievous nor the interested fault-findings of unsympathetic and ignorant foreigners with whom we are all so familiar. The author's sole interest and motive in writing the book is 'truth' and 'welfare' of his motherland, and whatever comes from the pen of such an experienced scholar and patriot cannot be lightly disposed of.

For our part, we have found the book instructive and helpful in many respects, and we are in agreement with many of the criticisms made therein. But we hope

there is no reason for misunderstanding if we differ from the author in certain places. To begin with, one general impression left in our mind by reading the book is that the writer seems to have been obsessed by a dislike to the Brahmins in general and the priests in particular who have been represented as 'fraudulent, immoral and cunning', labouring as 'the spider for the entrapping of flies.' Whatever element of truth there may be in such statements, it appears to us that such statements will, without doubt, hinder the 'sympathy, toleration and unification' which the author wants to promote. It may be difficult to settle as to *how* and *why* the Brahmins, specially the priests, came to occupy the position (it is by no means enviable) which they do now. But what is much more important to realise is that, as they are at the present day, they are more ignorant than cunning and need education and enlightenment with the general mass of people. Hence pity and not contempt is the proper sentiment which ought to inspire the reformers in dealing with them.

Coming to the details, with regard to the vexed question of castes, the author concludes: "The caste system as now working has to be abolished altogether, if the Indian people are to have a new lease of life,..... as it is proving an unmitigated means of regress and hindrance to all progress." There is doubt that such a school of thought exists in our country. But a larger majority of the enlightened and progressive thinkers are of opinion that with the removal of untouchability, the fusion of all sub-castes and the abolition of the minor differences within the four broad divisions, sufficient unity and healthy progress are quite possible, and the doing away with the caste system altogether, whatever theoretical advantages it may be expected to bring about, is neither practicable nor desirable under the present circumstances. Another point to be borne in mind in this connection is that in order to justify any conceivable position one can easily cite scriptural authority. For instance, the teachings of the Vedanta proclaim universal

brotherhood. But that does not mean that the position one is trying to maintain will hold good under all circumstances. The teachings of the scriptures rarely, if ever at all, affect the daily conduct of the masses, for they are often illiterate. Hence under the existing state of the Hindu society, the advocacy of the abolition of the caste system is bound to prove a veritable cry for the moon. Practical wisdom suggests that our immediate efforts should be directed towards the solution of such pressing problems as untouchability and the like that are eating into the vitals of the Hindu race. If we are taken up too much with an Utopian ideal, there is the danger of the essential problems being overlooked and neglected.

Coming to the four Ashramas and the Dharmas peculiar to each, the first Ashrama *viz.* Brahmacharya, it may be said, has almost disappeared, and what survive of this Ashrama are its formal rites and ceremonies divested of their true spirit and significance. We think few differ from the author as regards most of the criticisms of the Upanayana Sanskara (the sacred thread ceremony). But what is striking is his excessive zeal for reform which has often betrayed him into gross mistakes. For instance, with regard to the ancient custom of the Gurukula by which a Brahmachari was required to live for a period of twelve years or more in the house of his Guru, the author observes: "I have purposely referred here only to the Brahmanas, for I cannot but regard the Grihya Sūtra assumption that these long periods of theological training were meant for all the members of the three twice-born castes as nothing more than priestly schematism! The warrior and the merchant would scarcely be able to spare the time for the special training required for their avocations to waste it on acquiring ritual lore which they could never utilise." The Ramayana and the Mahabharata abound with many instances of the Kshatriya and other caste youths spending their student life in the family of their teachers, and they were taught not merely the contemptible 'ritual lore' as the author wrongly supposes, but all the arts and

sciences which would be useful to them in their after-life. We can hardly believe that an able scholar like Babu Govinda Das can miss such a patent fact, and we are afraid that his unconscious bias towards the priestly class must have led him astray.

The author's dislike to the Sadhus and Sannyasins comes next. In this instance, too, we find he has lost his balance of mind and even gone to the extreme of condemning the ideal of monasticism. As space will not allow us to quote his opinions on the subject at length, we shall be content with citing a few specimens. He writes : "An unmarried life is emphatically an incomplete life, an anti-social life, inimical to all civilisation and to be strenuously avoided by all right-thinking normal persons. * * * These people (the Yogis and Vedantins whom the author regards as holding low opinions) are the enemies of all true civilisation and progress. * * * So it has been laid down in our books that *every one was bound to get married and bound to beget children.*" Regarding these views, we shall leave it to our readers to form their conclusions. As for ourselves, we can say this much that beyond the violent assertions made by the author we see no valid justification for his position. Closely related to this subject are the opinion of the author regarding Sannyas. After pointing out that Sannyas is prohibited in the Kali-Yuga, the author remarks : "For owing to economic and sexual demoralisations, due to the large body of persons (52 lakhs) who have adopted this mode of life, not because of the impellings of a true and lasting Vairagya, but out of manifold selfishness, it is condemned by all right-thinking and truly religious persons." Again he observes : "And every fellow who is too worthless to be a good citizen, shirks his civil duties and forthwith dons the ochre-coloured robe, thus becoming Mukta, 'free'—free to live in luxury and vice at the expense of his better and more credulous fellow-citizens."

There is no denying the fact that the high ideal of Sannyas is far away from the lives of the majority of

those who call themselves Sannyasins. But this, by no means, entitles the author to make a sweeping condemnation of the time-honoured institution of Sannyas and of all Sadhus without exception. Of late it has become a kind of fashion with a class of reformers to cry down Sannyas and Sannyasins. But we think it would be proper and reasonable if the real truth about the vexed question is sought after and analysed before entering into a merciless condemnation of it. It is notorious that many beggars, pure and simple, adopt the garb of a Sadhu and live upon alms, and it is this class which swells the census figure, and more than three-fourths of the Indian Sannyasins may be accounted for in this way. Again, even among the much smaller section of the Sadhus, corruption and degeneration, it must be admitted, have crept in. It is a lamentable fact, no doubt, and every honest and peaceful attempt at reform is what is desirable. But we are of opinion that the proper remedy lies not in violent condemnation of the ideal and of the institution upholding it. What we should do is to give a new turn and direction to the old tradition of the monastic life in India, so that it may be utilised for the good and welfare of the people. The efforts of the great Swami Vivekananda in this direction, so fully justified by the wonderful results they have brought, will serve as examples.

Sometimes the author condemns the later developments of the Hindu religion on the authority of the Vedas, although he does not put much faith in the ancient Vedic ideals. He is quite entitled to hold his own opinions about the Brahmins, the priest class and the institution of monasticism, but we cannot help observing that in his judgment, he has not strictly adhered to the fine sentiments of 'unification, sympathy, toleration etc.' which, he maintains, have prompted him to write the book. Even his disapprovals would not have suffered in value if they had been expressed more moderately. Barring such minor points, the book is full of instructive and

critical observations, and we have no doubt it will be found valuable by all students and reformers of the Hindu society.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA

CHAPTER XIV.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

यो विद्याश्रुतसंपन्न आत्मवान्मानुषिकः ॥

मायामात्रमिदं ज्ञात्वा ज्ञानं च मयि संन्यसेत् ॥ १ ॥

The Lord said :

1. One who is endowed with scriptural erudition culminating in realisation, who has attained to the Self, and has not mere theoretical knowledge, should surrender¹ knowledge (with its means) to Me,—knowing the universe to be but an illusion.

[1 *Surrender &c.*—After realisation he attains to a stage known as Vidwat-Sannyasa. He remains with unconditional devotion to the Lord.]

ज्ञानिनस्त्वहमेवेषः स्वार्थो हेतुश्च संमतः ॥

स्वर्गश्चैवापवर्गश्च नान्योऽर्थो मदृते प्रियः ॥ २ ॥

2. For I am the desired goal of the Jnani and its efficient means ; I am his worldly prosperity as well as liberation. There is nothing else but Me which is dear to him.

ज्ञानविज्ञानसंसिद्धाः पदं श्रेष्ठं विदुर्मम ॥

ज्ञानी प्रियतमोऽतो मे ज्ञानेनासौ विभर्ति माम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. Those who have perfected themselves in knowledge and realisation attain to My supreme abode. Since the Jnani cherishes Me through his knowledge, therefore he is the most beloved of Me.

तपस्तीर्थं जपो दानं पवित्राणीतराणि च ॥

नालं कुर्वन्ति तां सिद्धिं या ज्ञानकलया कृता ॥ ४ ॥

4. Austerity, pilgrimage, repetition of the Mantra, charity, and whatever else is sacred, cannot improve that perfection which springs from even a modicum of realisation.

तस्माज्ज्ञानेन सहितं ज्ञात्वा स्वात्मानमुद्धव ॥

ज्ञानविज्ञानसंपन्नो भज मां भक्तिभावतः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Therefore, O Uddhava, dwelling on thy own self till the attainment of realisation, be endowed with knowledge and realisation, and worship Me with devotion.

ज्ञानविज्ञानयज्ञेन मामिच्छ्वात्मानमात्मनि ॥

सर्वयज्ञपतिं मां वै संसिद्धिं मुनयोऽगमन् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Sacrificing unto Me, the Self and Lord of all sacrifices, in their own selves, through the sacrifice of knowledge and realisation, sages¹ have attained to perfection in that they have realised Me.

[¹ Sages—in ancient times.]

त्वय्युद्धवाश्रयति यस्त्रिविधो विकारो

मायान्तरापतति नाद्यपवर्गयोर्यत् ॥

जन्मादयोऽस्य यदमी तव तस्य किं स्यु-

राद्यन्तयोर्यदसतोस्ति तदेव मध्ये ॥ ७ ॥

7. The threefold¹ modification, O Uddhava, which has come upon thee is an illusion, for it only comes in the middle,² and is not at the beginning and end. When birth and such other things befall it,³ what is that to thee? For that⁴ which exists at the beginning and end of an unreality, alone persists in the middle.

[¹ Threefold &c.—Gross, subtle and causal bodies are meant.

² Middle—like a snake or garland in the rope.

³ It—refers to 'modification' in line 1.

⁴ That &c.—e.g. the rope in a false perception of snake or garland.]

उद्धव उवाच ।

ज्ञानं विशुद्धं विपुलं यथैतद्वैराग्यविज्ञानयुतं पुराणम् ॥

आख्याहि विश्वेश्वर विश्वमूर्ते त्वद्वक्तियोगं च महद्विमृग्यम् ॥८॥

Uddhava said :

8. O Lord of the universe, O Thou whose form is the universe, please tell me how this pure and ancient knowledge, which is coupled with dispassion and realisation, becomes steady. Please also tell me about the systematic practice of that devotion to Thee which the great¹ seek.

[1 Great—great sages, and even Brahmâ.]

तापत्रयेणाभिहतस्य घोरे संतप्यमानस्य भवाध्वनीश ॥

पश्यामि नान्यच्छरणं तवाङ्घ्रिद्वन्द्वातपत्रादमृताभिवर्षात् ॥९॥

9. O Lord, for a man smitten by the threefold¹ affliction and suffering torment in the dire pathway² of the world, I see no other refuge than Thy feet which³ act not only like an umbrella but also rain nectar.

[1 *Threefold &c.*—troubles due to physical disorders, to denizens of the earth and to natural phenomena.

² *Pathway &c.*—labyrinth of births and deaths.

³ *Which &c.*—which not only remove temporal evils but also confer immortality.]

दष्टं जनं संपतितं विलेऽस्मिन्कालाहिना क्षुद्रसुखोरुतर्षम् ॥

समुद्धरेनं कृपयापवर्गैर्ध्वोभिरासिञ्च महानुभाव ॥ १० ॥

10. O Thou of wonderful powers, deign to save this man fallen into this worldly pit and bitten by the snake of Time, and withal thirsting violently after trivial pleasures, and sprinkle him over with words that conduce to liberation.

[The metaphor is changed in this verse.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

इत्थमेतत्पुरा राजा भीष्मं धर्मभृतां वरम् ॥

अजातशत्रुः पप्रच्छ सर्वेषां नोऽनुशृण्वताम् ॥ ११ ॥

The Lord said :

11. In days gone by King Yudhishthira asked the very same thing of Bhishma, the best of pious men in exactly this way—to which We all listened.

निवृत्ते भारते युद्धे सुहृन्निधनविह्वलः ॥

श्रुत्वा धर्मान्वहून्पश्चान्मोक्षधर्मानपृच्छत ॥ १२ ॥

12. When the Mahabharata War was finished, he, overwhelmed at the death of his relatives, after listening to various other religious, inquired about the religion of liberation.

तानहं तेऽभिधास्यामि देवव्रतमुखाच्छ्रुतान् ॥

ज्ञानवैराग्यविज्ञानश्रद्धामत्युपवृंहितान् ॥ १३ ॥

13. That religion enriched with knowledge, dispassion, realisation, faith and devotion, I am relating to thee, as heard from the lips of Bhishma.

(To be continued.)

MAN VERSUS STATE.

It is the boast of the West that in comparison with the East it has realised in practice to the utmost possible limit the principles of democracy. To examine the validity of this claim will take us very far into the details of current history. But one distinction between the East and the West in respect of the position and importance assigned to man and the state respectively is worth our attention. In the main, theorists in the West have always regarded man as a political animal. and even when the moral rights of the personality were recognised, in practice the interests of the state have always loomed large before the public eye. In the East, on the other hand, the sphere and functions of the state were strictly confined within definite limits, and the village republics and the caste organisations gave ample scope

for the growth and development of man in absolute freedom from the spheres of state influence. Not only this, but also the spiritual interests of the individual were regarded to be of such supreme value that at a certain stage of mental evolution the individual had the right to go beyond all caste, society and state. We are referring, of course, to the ideal of the Sannyasin.

Even in the case of those who were within the jurisdiction of the state and were bound down to it by the ties of citizenship, the state deserved respect and obedience only so far as it fulfilled its own duties and helped towards the promotion of Dharma. From the early Vedic times down to the age of the Mahabharata, we come across innumerable instances of this qualified respect to the state, and nowhere do we find the blind worship of the state as an end in itself which is characteristic of the West even at the present day. It is, however, not to be understood from this that any individual may set himself up against the state under cover of moral and spiritual considerations and yet claim the rights and privileges from it.

The powers and privileges which the people enjoyed in the matter of the choice of kings and their deposition were great. The limitations that were imposed upon the authority of the state, in the interests of moral and spiritual claims, never acted as a source of weakness to the stability of government. For, the passion for revolution and outbreaks of such other forms of violence never at any period took root in the minds of the people. "Firm is the sky, firm the earth, and firm also those hills. Steadfast is all this living world and steadfast the king of them" (Rigveda, X, 173. 4.). This and many other similar texts that are to be met with in the literature of the Hindus, go to show to what an extent the people did realise and appreciate the blessings of peace and order. But the ancient Hindu law-givers were not blind to the necessity of bringing about a change in the existing order even by resorting to violence when, in extreme cases, the highest interests of the public demanded it. For instance,

the Mahabharata holds thus—"The subjects should arm themselves for slaying that king who does not protect them, who simply plunders their wealth, who confounds all distinctions, who is incapable of taking their lead, who is without compassion, and who is regarded as the most sinful of kings. That king who tells his people that he is their protector, but who does not or cannot protect them, should be slain by the combined subjects, like a dog that is affected by the rabies and has become mad." (Anusasana Parva, 96.)

This and other similar opinions of the ancient writers, whether they were merely a counsel of perfection or a pious wish in the form of a deterrent to the tyrants, or whether the people ever acted upon the advice by resorting to such extreme measures, we have no means at present of determining beyond all possibility of doubt. Whichever be the case, whatever warlike spirit was in the nation had all passed into the region of tales and legends, due to the natural decadence, according to some historians. While others would lay the blame at the doors of Buddhism and its insistence upon non-violence as a universal rule of conduct, irrespective of stage, class, and function.

It is no doubt true that in India, even from the early Vedic period, non-violence was always considered to be the highest virtue. But no virtue, however superior in itself, was ever conceded the right to rule out other virtues in their proper spheres. The disorganisation and confusion that one meets with in the various departments of life to-day, are due to causes, most of which cannot be easily traced to their origin. At a very opportune and critical period in the history of the world, the virtue of non-violence has been brought prominently before the public eye. *While we believe it is through the wide acceptance and practice of non-violence alone on the part of the individuals and nations alike that any permanent peace and harmony can be established in the world,* we must utter also a note of warning. So long as weakness and cowardice (physical, intellectual and moral)

is allowed to masquerade under this guise, no good but harm only will be the result. Nor can any section of humanity in any particular part of the world ever realise to the full the ideal of non-violence, so long as the rest act upon the principle that might is right.

Granted this is all true, what is the alternative? Certainly, not violence. In course of time, the doctrine of force, when pushed to its logical extreme, will reveal its self-destroying nature. In the meanwhile all those who set no limits to the possibilities of human evolution, will have to go on with the patient labour of love and demonstrate both by example and precept that considerations of the moral and spiritual personality of man must be the supreme goal, in the interests of which all claims of class, race, nationality etc. could only be given a subordinate position.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

WOMEN OF INDIA.—By Swami Vivekananda. Published by the Vedanta Society, 2963 Webster Street, San Francisco, California, U. S. A. Pp. 30. Price not mentioned.

The notes of a lecture, delivered by the great Swami at the Shakespeare Club House, Pasadena, California, in 1900, furnish the materials of this newly published pamphlet. It will, we are sure, form a valuable addition to his Complete Works which have already come out.

As the title itself shows, the pamphlet records some of Swamiji's observations on Indian Women and is a vindication of their ideal and place in society. Swamiji makes an apology and feels diffident to say anything with precision and authority on the subject, for, as he says, he belongs to an order of people who do not marry and have little knowledge about women in all their relations. Still it can be said that his remarks, coming as they do from a master-mind and a keen observer of things,

have a peculiar value of their own. They are really illuminating and throw a great flood of light on some of our vital problems of womanhood.

Beautifully does he bring out the ideal for which our women stand. Says he: "The ideal of womanhood in India is motherhood—that marvelous, unselfish, all-suffering, ever-forgiving mother. The wife walks behind—the shadow. She must imitate the life of the mother; that is her duty." Yes, in India, the word 'woman' reminds one invariably of motherhood and the motherhood of God. So it is a word to conjure with, it is a symbol into which are crowded all those associations that are sweet, endearing and holy.

As a contrast, Swamiji places before us, side by side, the picture of the Western womanhood and its ideal which is diametrically opposite to that of ours. "In the West the woman is wife. The idea of womanhood is concentrated there—as the wife * * * In the Western home, the wife rules," says he. No unjust criticism or condemnation is intended here, nor is there any question of 'superior or inferior.' What he means to show is that with the difference of the outlooks upon life, the ideals of womanhood also differ in India and in the West.

Incidentally Swamiji speaks of such questions as the marriage, widowhood, education and the like of our women. We recommend this pamphlet to our readers.

OPIMUM IN INDIA.—Published by the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon, 111 Russa Road, Calcutta. Pp. 81.

This booklet contains the results of the enquiry into the use of opium in India as undertaken by the National Christian Council at the request of the International Missionary Council.

As has been mentioned in the foreword, this enquiry, though incomplete in its range, has no other aim before it than to arrive at the truth. We hope this publication will elicit helpful suggestion and criticism from the public.

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THE SERPENT POWER (Second Revised Edition).—By Arthur Avalon. Published by Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 320+184. Price : Indian Rs. 20/- ; foreign 30s.

Some years back we had the pleasure of publishing an elaborate review of this scholarly treatise of which this is the second revised edition. Among other things, this book describes and explains in fuller detail the nature of the Kundalini Sakti—the serpent power that ordinarily remains in a state of sleep, coiled in the sacral plexus of the human body. It also deals with the disciplinary practices by which that power can be roused. The introduction covering over 300 pages reveals the vast erudition and masterly grasp of the Tantras the author has, and is a valuable help to the study of the main book.

To this edition have been added the Sanskrit texts along with their English translations and also several half-tone plates taken from life showing some positions in Kundalini Yoga. The paper, printing and get up of the book are superb ; but the price seems to be very high.

## NEWS AND NOTES.

### FLOODS AND FAMINES.

The year 1924 has witnessed a deluge on a small scale. China and Russia had some floods, but the greatest sufferer was India. Such a disaster affecting almost all parts of India at the same time has never been heard of before. Although our country has suffered only from floods during the last year, their unprecedented nature and magnitude are bound to produce, if not a year of severe famine, at least one of great economic stress. If one studies the agricultural and economic conditions of India during the last half of this century or more, it becomes apparent that famine and distress have made India their permanent home.

The first thought that would occur to every mind is that such evils as flood, famine etc. are more or less

beyond the powers of man and can be minimised only by measures, calculated to relieve the distress after the actual calamity has overtaken the people. But from our familiarity with the researches of modern science and the knowledge that has been revealed to us by experts with respect to the conditions of rainfall, changes of weather, etc., we cannot altogether rest ourselves content with laying the whole blame upon the Heavens. If such calamities cannot always be effectively prevented, there cannot be any doubt that by the adoption of suitable precautionary measures, they can at least be controlled to a large extent.

Writing on this same subject in the China Journal of Science and Arts, Arthur De C. Sowerby observes with reference to the frequent occurrence of floods and famines in North China—"Floods and famines are, of course, directly attributable to unfavourable climatic and physiological conditions, nor until one looked into the matter would one be inclined to blame the Government or people of a country suffering from such ills. Rather would one pity them. But scientific investigation has led us to a knowledge of the reasons why certain kinds of climate are to be met with in certain countries, as well as the agencies at work to produce the physiographical features of those countries."

The remedies suggested by the writer are : (1) afforestation of the mountain regions, (2) deepening the channels of rivers (silted or silting)—keeping them well-scoured, and construction of dykes as well as other conservancy work. It is for the experts of the Government to investigate and find out how far these remedies are applicable to the conditions of India.

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

We are glad to inform our readers that the Vedanta Society of San Francisco is growing steadily. The lectures given by Swami Prakashananda and Swami Prabhavananda are being attended by larger and more interested crowds. They find there behind the words uttered

something they cannot define and which is lacking in ordinary churches. So they go there again and again and are comforted by the truths of Vedanta.

The subjects of the lectures given by the Swamis during the month of September were as follows: Divine Inspiration, Way to Blessedness, How to lead the Life of Harmony, Secret of Right Activity, Is Self-control absolutely necessary? Concentration and Meditation, Characteristics of an Illuminated soul, Ideal of Universal Religion.

#### THE TRUTH ABOUT OTHER RELIGIONS.

All perhaps might have heard of the interesting story about the colour of a chameleon. It is this. Two persons both of whom had seen the chameleon, were hotly disputing. One said, "Well, the chameleon on that tree is of a beautiful red colour." The other contradicting him rejoined, "You are mistaken. It is not red, it is blue." Not being able to settle the matter by arguments, they both went to a person who always lived under that tree and had watched the chameleon in all its different colours as also in its colourless state. One of them then said, "Sir, is not that animal on that tree of a red colour?" The person referred to replied, "Yes, Sir." The other disputant said, "What do you say? How is it? It is not red, it is blue." The referee again humbly replied, "Yes, Sir." As that person knew that the chameleon is a creature that constantly changes its colours he could say 'Yes' to both the conflicting statements. The *Sacchidananda* likewise, looked through the categories of human reason, appears to have various forms. The devotee who has seen God in only one aspect knows Him in that aspect alone. And he who has seen Him in all His manifold aspects both personal and impersonal, is alone in a position to say, "All these forms are of the one God, and God is also beyond forms. He is both formless and with form."

All quarrels among the various religions of the world, which produce no inconsiderable amount of harm, result from the ignorance of the real truth. It is by no means an uncommon thing to find that even amongst those who are educated and are the custodians of any particular religion, a large majority are ignorant of the fundamental principles of other religions. Again, by the ordinary mass of people even the essentials of their own religion are neither well-taught nor understood, and consequently they afford a favourable field of exploitation for the fanatics, bigots and others who seek their own interests. To remedy this sort of evil which is found more or less in every part of the world, it has been suggested by some that the fundamental truths of every religion should be made available in the shape of small and cheap pamphlets. In one of the hitherto unpublished letters of Tolstoy which appeared in a recent issue of the *Current Thought*, the Russian sage observes—"The weakening of the religious consciousness among the common people is chiefly due, in my opinion, to their being brought up in complete ignorance of the creeds of other peoples, and in the belief in the exclusive truth of their own faith. With such an up-bringing and in their present state of mental development, the working people come across religious assertions purporting to be indubitable truths which they naturally cannot believe. Meanwhile all the doctrines of their religion imparted to them are so indissolubly bound up with the acceptance of the divine inspiration of the scriptures and of the infallibility of the Church, that men, being unable to separate the most essential truths from the least essential, cease to believe in the teaching of the Church in its entirety."

Tolstoy's analysis of the effect of the ignorance of the fundamental truths of other religions on the minds of the literate and upper classes of people is most unerring. He points out: Every one is familiar with the fact that while the more bold and sincere section relegates religion to the region of those superstitions which were once useful but have outlived their past utility, the other much larger

portion of people merely observe the outward conventions and forms. The mischief does not end here. It is wrongly claimed that in opposition to religion, science is a more reliable guide in the unchartered ocean of life, and the consequence is that in the place of love and goodwill, which all religions emphatically proclaim, strife and competition hold unbridled sway over the minds of all men. Under the circumstances, the moral and spiritual claims of humanity have to go to the wall. The mere bringing within easy reach of all of the essentials of the great religions cannot, of course, whistle away all evil and inaugurate the kingdom of heaven on earth, but much of the mischief that flows from ignorance and intolerant prejudice should be reduced to a minimum.

#### SWAMI BODHANANDA BACK TO NEW YORK.

Swami Bodhananda, the President of the Vedanta Society, New York, U. S. A., returned to the field of his activities on 20th September last, after a short stay of a few months in India, his motherland. On his way to America by the Atlantic route, he went to Switzerland and spent about four weeks in Interlaken as the guest of some friends. At Berne he availed himself of the occasion of speaking on Vedanta to a small audience of sincere students.

On the arrival of the Swami at the New York port, many of his friends and admirers went to meet him at the pier. Despite the stringency of the immigration laws, the Swami had no difficulty in landing. He drove to the Vedanta Society premises where he had an informal talk with the assembled friends who were very glad to have the Swami back in their midst.

A special reception meeting was organised by the Society in honour of the Swami, and invitation cards were issued to all the members. The meeting was held on 24th September, and there was a fairly large gathering. Swami Raghavananda who was in charge of the Society in his absence, welcomed the Swami in a neat little speech. He said though as monks they were supposed to have no



ties and family, they still belonged to a spiritual family which had joys and beauties of its own, and it was such a spiritual joy they were experiencing on the return of Swami Bodhananda among them.

Mrs. Constance Elphinstone Klots, welcoming the Swami on behalf of the members of the Society, spoke among other things as follows: "The strong affection and friendship which Swami Bodhananda has so steadily and unostentatiously won from all associated with the Vedanta Society during his seventeen years' work here, has flourished and expanded during his absence, so that to-night our hearts are wide open to him in affectionate welcome." She referred to the incessant toil, prayer, poverty, loneliness and discouragement the Swami had to pass through in a strange land to make the work a success. Another gentleman, an old member of the Society, also lovingly spoke a few words welcoming the Swami.

Swami Bodhananda rising to reply expressed his heartfelt thanks to the members for the kind words they had spoken and the warm reception they had given him. He spoke of the present conditions of India, and of the stir of religious and philosophical activities that he had noticed there. In that connection, he also remarked how he had been pained to see here and there the increasing poverty, disease and misery of his countrymen. He concluded by saying that what India wanted was not religion and metaphysic which she had enough and to spare, but a little help to solve her dire economical problem.

With a few concluding words from Swami Raghavananda, the meeting terminated.

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# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT  
KURUKSHETRA.

The solar eclipse of 1907 was still a few days off. But Kurukshetra was already crowded with fifty thousand pilgrims from all over India when Swami Turiyananda and I alighted from a packed train that halted at the little railway station. It was towards evening that the great Mela (fair in connection with a religious festival) began. The Dharmasalas (rest-houses) and temporary sheds and tents were filled with men, women and children, huddled together like sheep in their folds. We went from place to place but could find no shelter, and there remained nothing to do but spread our blankets with other pilgrims under the protecting branches of a magnificent banyan tree. Placing our little bundles at the head of our blankets to serve as pillows, we sat down and rested.

Presently a woman approached us and with palms folded against her breast asked whether we had had supper. When the Swami answered that we had not eaten yet, she hastily retreated and from her own camp brought us milk, wheat cakes and a vegetable curry. Simple as the meal was, we both enjoyed it heartily. Then we stretched ourselves on our blankets and lay down to sleep.

I was watching the brilliant stars through the branches of the tree when after a while I saw the Swami sit up.

“What is the matter, Swami?” I asked.

“Gurudasa,” he answered, “now you are a true Sannyasin.”

“That is what I want to be, Swami,” I responded, and I quoted from Swamiji’s *Song of the Sannyasin* :

“Have thou no home. What home can hold  
thee, friend?

The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed; and food  
What chance may bring; well cooked or ill,  
Judge not.

No food or drink can taint that noble Self  
Which knows itself. The rolling river free  
Thou ever be, Sannyasin bold! Say—

*Aum tat sat, aum!*”

“That is it! That is it!” the Swami exclaimed. “We are Mother’s children, we have nothing to fear. She gives and She takes. Blessed be Her name.” Then followed one of his familiar eulogies of Swamiji. “He was the true Sannyasin. In luxury and poverty he was the same. He knew that he was the Atman, the witness, ever free. Weal or woe meant nothing to him. The world was his stage. And how nicely he played his

part. He lived for the good of others. There was no selfishness in him. He had no axe to grind. Always living and preaching the Master's message. Our Master used to say : 'He can do anything he pleases. Nothing can spoil him !''

Then after a little pause : "But we have to be careful. Maya is so powerful. We are so easily caught and deluded."

"But," I interposed, "Mother can protect us."

"You are right, never forget it. Always trust in Her. What is life without Her? It is all sham and humbug. She alone is real."

Another pause, and then : "Now try to sleep a little. To-morrow we may find a better place."

I tried to sleep but could not. The experience was so novel, and thoughts came rushing into my mind. The Swami was lying down again, but I don't think he slept any more than I did. It must have been long after midnight when I saw him get up.

"Gurudasa, it is raining," he said, "we must get shelter somewhere." I had not noticed the sudden change in the sky. When I listened I heard rain drops fall on the leaves of the tree. We got up and with our blankets over our heads went in search of shelter. But, as before, we found every place filled. The Swami, however, was determined to get in somewhere. And so against the loud protestations of the pilgrims we pushed our way into one of the open sheds. There was a great hubbub, loud voices and sleepy voices, abuse and discussion of which I understood very little. I thought they would throw us out bodily. But suddenly the noise quieted down, and a little room was made for us. We lay down wedged in

between other pilgrims like sardines in a box. We were out of the rain anyhow, and presently I fell asleep. When I awoke in the morning I found that a child was using my legs for a pillow. I was sore all over, for I had been lying on a hard earthen floor not any too smooth.

As said before, we were in an open shed, that is, it had only three walls and a roof. And now the sun was shining through the open space. Many of the pilgrims had already gone out to wash themselves at the well near-by. We followed their example, and when we returned found the shed half empty, for many of the pilgrims had gone in search of better lodgings.

I asked the Swami how he had succeeded in getting inside the shed, while the opposition was so strong. He laughed and said, "You don't know us yet. We make a big noise, but there is nothing back of it. You, in the West, take everything so seriously. Here you will see two men talk and gesticulate as if they were going to kill each other. But five minutes later they sit and smoke together and talk as if they were old friends. That is our way. These people are not educated, but they have good hearts. When they saw that we were really in trouble, they made room for us though it was so inconvenient for them. I told them that you were a stranger in a strange land and a Sannyasin. At once they became curious and wanted to know all about you. Then they said, 'Come, brothers, we will make room for you.' You will always find it so. Sannyasins are respected all over India, especially by the poor. They are simple and kind-hearted, not sophisticated like some of our educated people. Swamiji loved the poor. His heart bled for them. 'They are my gods,' he used to say. That is why

our Mission works so much among the poor. All over India we have centres for them. We educate them and give them free medical treatment. We serve God in the poor."

After a while he said, "We are on the battle-field of Kurukshetra where Sri Krishna preached the Gita." Then he began to chant from memory the second chapter. A few pilgrims came and listened. He chanted in a loud voice with much feeling. I was thrilled with the beauty and rhythm of the Sanskrit text.

Swami had just finished chanting when a gentleman approached us. He scowled and said, "What are you doing in my shed?" The Swami replied, "We are Sannyasins, we are taking shelter here." "Who is the Sahib?" he asked, pointing to me. (We learned later that he suspected me of being an English spy in disguise.) Swami told him who I was and that I had come to see the Mela and bathe in the holy waters of Kurukshetra. At this he became quite amiable and said, "You may both stay here as my guests. I will supply you with food." He called a servant and told him to place some straw under our blankets. Then saluting us very humbly he went away.

When he was gone, Swami said to me, "See how Mother plays. Now we can be at peace. Do you think you can stand it?"

"Yes, Swami," I replied, "I am sure I can."

A little later a servant brought us food—unleavened wheat cakes and molasses. He brought this every morning. And every evening it was wheat cakes and lentil soup, for nine days. Sometimes the gentleman would come and ask how we were getting along. There were

other pilgrims in the shed, but we had sufficient room there to spread our blankets. These pilgrims cooked their simple meals on little earthen stoves built against the inner wall. As there was no outlet for the smoke, the air often became suffocating, and it made my eyes sting. But we did not complain as it could not be remedied. We got along very well except that I suffered from fever now and then. I was, however, able to move about. On the days when I had fever, I could not eat the coarse food, and Swami, full of tender solicitude for my health, would buy me a cup of milk.

In the evening many would come to converse with the Swami and to receive spiritual advice from him. He would talk for hours till late in the night, never tiring. He was always ready to speak on religion. After our morning bath and meal, we would go about among the pilgrims, visit other Sadhus (Sannyasins) and holy places. We were shown the exact spot where Sri Krishna delivered the Gita to Arjuna, the place where Bhishma expired at his own will—his body resting on a bed of arrows, and many other places sanctified by tradition. There was an enormous banyan tree in whose branches Sadhus lived like birds in little shelters made of leaves and twigs. Most interesting was the great concourse of monks of different sects. There were naked monks and those who wore only clouts, the rest of their bodies besmeared with ashes from the *dhuni* or sacred fire. Others wore salmon-coloured robes and turbans. Some had long shaggy hair bleached by the sun and hanging down their shoulders or coiled like a little tower on top of the head. And there were shaven monks and Brahmacharins in white tunics. It was the most motley crowd I had ever seen.

Erudite Pandits and Sannyasins held discussions under the trees, or seated cross-legged in front of their little tents or straw huts, they read or chanted from the Vedas. One monk had taken the vow of perpetual silence; another took food only when it was offered to him. One monk in a red robe had taken the vow to remain standing in one place for nine days, his arms resting on a trapeze attached to the limb of a tree. There was something to interest us wherever we went.

Then came the day when everyone must bathe during the auspicious hour when the sun was eclipsed and twilight enfolded us. The crowds were so vast and the rush so great that though the reservoirs were of enormous dimensions it was difficult to enter into the water. But we succeeded in dipping three times when the eclipse was full. It was a grand spectacle—this bathing in the sacred waters by thousands of enthusiastic devotees.

Afterwards we discussed the merit of bathing and other religious performances. Swami said: "It all depends on our mental attitude, on our faith and belief. Where there is true devotion, the result is good. It purifies the mind. We must try to see Mother in everything. That will make us spiritual." Then he quoted from Chandi, "To that Divine Mother who dwells in all living beings in the form of consciousness, we bow down again and again."

"She is in everything, and She is everything. She is the river, She is the mountain, She is all. That is a grand vision. Our Master had that. He did not see the Ganges, but only Brahman."

For nine days I enjoyed the blessings of the Swami's company at this holy place. Then the Mela came to a



close, and we separated. Swami remained at Kurukshetra for a few days as the guest of a gentleman who then took him to his home at Anup Sahar. I left for Delhi and other places on my way to the Belur Math. I did not see the Swami again till three years later when we met once more at Kankhal.

SWAMI ATULANANDA.

### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The last Indian National Congress had its session at Belgaum, and Mahatma Gandhi, its President, guided its proceedings like an expert pilot. The address delivered by him, though brief and simple, is really a treat. It may lack in the subtle touches of a shrewd diplomat, but it is forcible and full of noble sentiments. Besides, it is suggestive and deals with a variety of important subjects connected with the national problem. Of course, the address as such contains nothing that may be called new and original, for he has simply restated therein the views which he has been emphasising so long in his organ, the *Young India* and in his lectures. But we cannot but admit that he has imparted in his characteristic way a unique freshness and vigour to it. The key-note of his message, as we understand it, is constructive work, and it consists in giving effect to the triple programme outlined by him and accepted by the Congress. It is, in other words, the revival of the spinning wheel, the removal of untouchability and the Hindu-Moslem unity. There can be no doubt, as Mahatmajī also promises, that if this

programme is widely accepted and worked in all its details, we shall go a long way towards the attainment of Swaraj. As we are interested in constructive work and have faith in its utility for our national regeneration, we shall consider here the three items of the programme.

This is an age of scientific improvement, and we hear almost daily of the invention of wonderful machines that are rapidly minimising time and labour. In these days, you cannot expect that the people should go back to the middle ages and take to the spinning wheel. It is a crude, antiquated thing, and the yarn produced by it is neither fine nor paying. Besides, there is nothing interesting about it to occupy a man.—These are some of the objections put forward against the spinning wheel, and Mahatmaji considers them one by one and tries to explode them. To him spinning is the symbol of India's peace and plenty. It unites a high idealism and an immense practical usefulness in one. We also agree with him, if not wholly, at least partially, that it is so. Spinning is one of those industries, mostly managed by the village people, that contributed largely to the prosperity of our country in the past. It "kept the wolf from the doors of thousands of homes, scattered over a surface, 1900 miles long and 1500 miles broad." But unfortunately with the advent of machinery and the flooding of the market with mill-made cloth, this industry died out in India. The people who used to spin had to give it up; and the professional weavers, having no other means of subsistence, had either to take to agriculture or some other avocation and live a wretched existence.

It must not be thought that we are wholly against machinery, nor is Mahatmaji, as we can gather from his writings. But we are not its blind admirers, nor is he. We say, as he also perhaps will say, it is not an unmixed blessing. Rightly estimated, it has done more harm than good to man. It has killed the finer and nobler sentiments of individuals by removing the variations of life and spoiling its beauty. It has been debasing and dehumanising in its effects. It has swelled the purse of the wealthy minority—the unscrupulous and heartless capitalists, by depriving the masses of their bare necessities. Here in India, it has impoverished the villages by its wanton destruction of the cottage industries. Again, side by side with it, it has created a class of landless, wage-earning, semi-starving slaves who have nothing to cheer them in life. The miserable condition and the nauseating atmosphere of the slums and barracks where these people—the labourers and coolies—live, are the clearest proofs of what human misery has been brought on by machinery and its offspring, industrialism. Mahatmaji hopes and rightly so that with the revival of the spinning wheel and khaddar as well as the other cottage industries, India will regain her economic stability and national solidarity. It will distribute wealth and happiness to all, the high and the low, the classes and the masses.

The problem of untouchability is equally important, and we had occasion to discuss it many times in our paper. It is a question that concerns us, the Hindus alone. That it is a dark spot of our society and is a great hindrance to our national progress will be admitted by every

sane man. "Our helotry is a just retribution for our having created an untouchable class. The sooner we remove the blot, the better it is for us Hindus," remarks Mahatmaji in his presidential address, and he has ample reasons to say so. Untouchability should be done away with at once. It has no moral or religious justification. It is a crime against humanity. However much the interested people—the priests, may argue and try to give an esoteric or scientific explanation for its existence, no ethics or religion will ever give its sanction to it. Hinduism that upholds the unity of life and the Divinity of all creatures, great or small, cannot but condemn it. It is a travesty of religion that tells one that to touch a man is pollution. If we trace its origin, we shall see that untouchability has its basis in hatred and selfishness. It is an inequity or injustice of one section of people, who are powerful in society against another who are weak. It is the high caste Hindus who are responsible for this disgraceful custom, and let them do penance for the wrongs they have done and are still doing, in the sacred name of religion, to the lower castes by removing the ban at once. For, as hatred begets hatred, the untouchable class, not a negligible part of our society, will ere long become wholly alienated from them and try to feed fat the ancient grudge at the earliest possible opportunity. And it means a great disaster to the Hindu society and the nation at large. It is high time that the leaders should take immediate steps and avert this calamity.

The Hindu-Moslem question is no less important than that of the spinning wheel or untouchability.

The Swaraj that we want is impossible unless and until it is satisfactorily solved. There must be unity and co-operation between the Hindus and the Mohammedans, for these two communities form the vital parts of the Indian nation. But unfortunately, in spite of the ceaseless efforts of Mahatmaji and other leaders to bring peace and amity amongst the different sections of our country, we notice a high tension of feeling existing between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. Not unoften this tension bursts forth and goes to the deplorable extreme of bloody feuds and fights as evidenced by the repeated occurrence of riots here and there, the Kohat tragedy being the worst of their kind. At this hour of our national struggle, when we are trying to put forth our combined efforts for the realisation of a common end, such communal dissensions are the greatest obstacles in our path, and if they continue in this way, we shall remain where we are. And even if we happen to get Swaraj by the Divine fiat or some such miracle (of course, it is impossible under the existing circumstances), it will never stand—it will come down with a crash like a tower on sands. For, as Mahatmaji says, “No Swaraj Government with any pretension to being a popular government can possibly be organised or maintained on a war-footing. A Swaraj Government means a government established by the free joint-will of Hindus, Mussalmans and others.” As we have been placed in the same land by Providence, with a common destiny, there is no other way for us but to live amicably together. By the very law of nature, one of us cannot grow and flourish at the expense of the other. Hence it will be for the good and welfare of both the communities, if we can settle our differences and live in

peace and harmony. The quarrels of friends are the opportunities of self-seekers—goes the trite saying. It is too true. Let us take counsel and profit by our past experience. Otherwise our fate will be like that of the bulls in the fable, who, being separated from each other by mutual distrust and jealousy, became an easy prey to their common enemy, the lion, who had been waiting for an opportunity.



What are the underlying causes of the Hindu-Moslem quarrels? The answer is not far to seek. If we enquire into and study any one of the recent riots critically, we shall see that nothing but trifles, dignified under the name of religion, are at the bottom of the whole thing. There is no deep moral or religious conviction at stake. Generally, it is some narrow-minded bigots or fanatics who, taking advantage of the credulity and ignorance of the mob, incite them to violence for some selfish end of their own, and thus all trouble ensues. But no Hindu or Mohammedan who is fairly acquainted with the main tenets of his own denomination, can claim that intolerance and violence are ever justifiable. Whatever be the causes, we hope that these communal squabbles are only temporary distempers and will disappear sooner or later. Mahatmaji also shares the same view. The Hindus and the Mohammedans are parts of the same national organism, and they must realise that they live or die together. It is a fact of history that the Mohammedans, unlike other foreigners, emigrated here to make India their permanent home. Of course, there had been cases of individual freebooters like Sultan Mahmud, Timur-i-Lang, Nadir Shah and others who came to India with fire and sword,

pillaged the country and returned home rich with spoils. But these are all stray, exceptional cases and do not prove the rule. Generally speaking, the Mohammedans lived with the Hindus on an understanding of mutual help and co-operation, progressing through various turns of fortune towards a common goal during the Moslem suzerainty. Hence the Indian culture as it now is—its sculpture, architecture and painting, its music and poetry, polity and religion, is a synthetic whole that contains both the Hindu and Moslem elements welded into one.

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Though the relation between the two communities had been in the main amicable, we must be frank and say that there was no true union of hearts during the Moslem rule. Of course, some of the Moslem rulers respected the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus, took part in the Hindu festivals, were in touch with the Hindu Yogis and Sannyasins, and sometimes even went so far as to visit the Hindu shrines. And some of the Moslem rulers, having due regard for the sentiments of the Hindus, imposed a special tax, called Jazari, on butchers for the killing of cows, and some even prohibited the slaughter of cows altogether in their kingdoms. But as their policy was mostly moulded by the prudential considerations of statecraft and not by any higher spiritual motive, they were not fully successful to win the hearts of the Hindus. The secret of Indian life has ever been spirituality. So here in India a common platform of spiritual ideals, where there is no room for communal or racial differences, can alone be the real meeting place of the divergent sects or communities. Some of the Hindu teachers, as for instance, Nanak, Kabir and Chaitanya, sought for the desired unity

and harmony on the universal experience of the soul, and they were, to a great extent, successful in their noble mission. This is borne out by the fact that all of them had, besides Hindu disciples, many equally zealous followers among the Mohammedans. But with the lapse of time and change of circumstances, the universal principles and ideals inculcated by them have lost their effect upon the hearts of the people. Truly, we are now in a situation that calls for a re-adjustment. Unless and until we—the Hindus and Mohammedans, are actuated by a community of spiritual ideals, the Hindu-Moslem question will ever remain unsolved. Of late, the world saw the advent of a new saving power in the persons of Sri Ramakrishna and his worthy disciple Swami Vivekananda, who were the perfect embodiments of universal toleration and preached a religion that is a synthesis of all faiths and creeds. If our warring sects and communities bear in mind, as Sri Ramakrishna used to say, that “the one Eternal Being is invoked by some as God, by some as Allah, by some as Hari, by others as Brahman,” there would be no cause left for quarrel and fight. Let the Moslem Ulemas and Hindu Sannyasins preach to everyone this unanimity of ideals, and we shall see ere long “the perfect India rising out of this chaos and strife, glorious and invincible with Vedantic brain and Islamic body.”

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We have discussed in our own way the three parts of the constructive programme framed by Mahatmaji and taken up by the Congress. Perhaps there are very few amongst the educated class of our country who will not admit their usefulness and importance as well as their power to bring Swaraj to India. But to make the scheme



a success, what is needed, first of all, is a vigorous and sustained propaganda in the villages, in the huts of the teeming millions who are quite in the dark and do not know what the word 'nation' means. Illiterate, ill-fed, ill-clad—they are sinking day by day; and with them the nation also is sinking, for they constitute the nation. Their dormant self-consciousness should be roused, so that they may raise their heads and assert their lost individuality. Let them have education—true man-making education for their soul, as well as sufficient bread for their body, and they will combine with us in our work for national regeneration. So long, they had nothing but scorn and neglect from us; let them now have love and sympathy and help. It means that we should primarily direct our energies towards the elevation of our masses. Of course, it is a hard task, and we shall have to go on slowly and steadily with infinite patience and sacrifice till we attain the goal.

### DEAR TO THE LORD.

BY BRAHMACHARI SURA CHAITANYA.

Who is dear to the Lord is a question which can be most satisfactorily answered only by the Lord Himself. Such a rare privilege, implying direct communion with God, is no doubt enjoyed by those few fortunate souls in whose cases the veil of ignorance or Maya has disappeared altogether. What then are the ordinary men to do? How are they to ascertain who is dear to the Lord? There are, of course, several means of doing that, although they are not quite certain and conclusive. Of these the best are the words of the Lord as given out to mankind in revelations handed down through seers and

prophets. But even here we are confronted with a difficulty which appears almost insuperable, for the seers and prophets are many in number, and more often than not they contradict one another.

This difficulty which at first sight presents a formidable appearance, is bound to give way before patient and careful analysis of the apparently conflicting scriptural texts. Taking the three most important religions of the world, that is, the Hindu, Christian and Islamic revelations, we find that each of them has got two distinct classes of teachings. The first class deals with truth in its eternal and universal nature upon which foundation all systems, generalisations and formulæ derive their authority, nay, upon which their very significance and explanation depend. This truth, or the Sanatana Dharma as the Hindus would call it, is one and all-inclusive. The other class is concerned with relative truth, revealed at a certain time and place for particular circumstances and environments. It is not that among the scriptural texts some portions fall into one class, while others fall into another. On the other hand, each one of them may be construed as consisting of two elements. One is eternal, unchanging and applicable to all places and conditions; and the other, by its very nature, form and expression, has a limited scope and is true and valid in its own sphere.

Another important point which deserves our attention at the very outset is this. The unchanging element, true for all times and places, is such that it has to be lived, experienced or realised by the individual in life. It has nothing to do with our so-called metaphysical or logical disputes. For, such disputes are nothing but a display of the intellect and have no connection with actual experience or intuition. Hence they are unable to take us far enough, as is best illustrated by the notorious divergences and contradictions between the different annotations and commentaries of the same scripture. Consequently any attempt to effect a reconciliation and harmony on purely intellectual and philosophical grounds

is foredoomed to failure. Nor is it necessary to achieve such an impossible task.

The religious history of the world down to our modern times reveals the most humiliating phenomenon of quarrels and dissensions between individuals and bloody wars and fights between races and nations, all taking place in the holy name of God and religion. If men are not blinded by passion, prejudice and perversion, they will at once realise how unkindness, cruelty or hatred can under no circumstances be sanctioned and tolerated by any religion. But as the word 'religion' is understood more as formalism and intellectuality and not as actual life or experience, such an intolerable travesty is made of it. Consequently the effective remedy for this abuse lies in insisting upon all the most obvious truth that religion is living experience and realisation and has very little to do with forms, dogmas and text-torturings.

Even those who are but superficially acquainted with the teachings of Christianity and Islam, ought to know that these religions, too, proclaim one Supreme Ruler, and recognise such cardinal virtues as purity, charity, faith and love as the flower and fruit of a religious life, as is done by other religions. The lives of the saints of these two great denominations also go to emphasise the fact that the more spiritual a man grows to be, the more does he practise all these great virtues and the less does he quarrel with the other religionists, however different these latter may be from the point of view of forms and dogmas. To quote only the most recent in the long line of great souls, Sri Ramakrishna, speaking about the essential unity and truth about all great religions, says—  
 "As one and the same material, namely water, is called by different names by different peoples, one calling it *water*, another *vari*, a third *aqua*, and a fourth *pani*; so the one *Sachchidananda*—the Absolute Existence-Intelligence-Bliss, is invoked by some as God, by some as Allah, by some as Hari and by others as Brahman." For this very reason he advises all—"Dispute not. As you rest firmly on your own faith and opinion, allow others

also the equal liberty to stand by their own faiths and opinions. By mere disputation, you shall never succeed in convincing another of his error. When the grace of God descends on him he will at once understand his own mistake."

We have been led into this long and apparent digression by the necessity of confining our illustrations to one scripture, *viz.*, the Bhagavad-Gita or the Divine Song which is universal in principles and widely-accepted. As we have already pointed out, every scripture has got both a universal and a particular aspect, and if conclusions are drawn mainly from the universal point of view of any scripture, it can not only not conflict with the other scriptures, but is also bound to be identical in spirit. A word or two with regard to the uniqueness and appropriateness of the Gita for this purpose may not altogether be deemed out of place. The Gita aims at not so much to advocate any particular form, path, or aspect of religious life, as to enunciate and elucidate the fundamentals and essentials of all religions. This is obvious when we find the different schools of Hinduism claiming that the Gita lends support to their views and conclusions. For instance, while the great Advaitin Sri Sankaracharya claims and interprets the Gita to suit his own theory, we find not only the old schools of devotion as those of Sri Ramanuja, Sri Madhvacharya and Lord Gauranga who believe in a personal God, but also such modern advocates of the philosophy of action like Lokamanya Tilak and Sri Aurobindo Ghose derive their authority and inspiration from the self-same Divine Song. For our part, we shall not be guided by any one of these partisan interpretations exclusively, but take the unsophisticated common-sense of the ordinary reader and try to get a satisfactory answer to our question with which we started.

"Who is dear to the Lord?" This is, as we said before, answered by the Lord Himself in the Gita. In a sense, all those who are *virtuous*, to whatever religion they may belong, and whichever one of the various paths prescribed for the attainment of the supreme spiritual

Goal they may follow, must be dear to the Lord. But as we have started to seek the answer for this question in the words of the Lord Himself as given out in the Gita, we shall turn now to a consideration of the text wherein the words 'dear to me' are used by Him. So far as we are able to gather, such words are used in verse 17 of Chapter VII and in the verses 13 to 20 of Chapter XII.

With reference to the 17th verse of chapter VII it is enough to say this much. In the previous verse we find the mention of four classes of devotees, of whom the Jnani or the man of wisdom whom He regards as the best, is spoken of as being dear to the Lord and the Lord being dear to him. In this context, the characteristics of this class of persons are not entered into in detail, and more for the sake of identification, as it were, just two qualifications, as implied in the words, *नित्ययुक्तः* (ever steadfast) and *एकभक्तिः* (who is devoted to Me alone) are hinted at. But in the second case, viz. in verses 13 to 20 of Chapter XII, the attributes and qualifications of the "dear ones" are considered in more elaborate details. Before we come to an examination of these qualities, it is necessary to say a few words with reference to the context which introduces the topic in question. The Lord urges Arjuna to enter into the fight in a detached spirit, leaving the success or failure in His hands. The Lord also speaks to him of the paths of knowledge and of action, emphasising the point that all creatures are but mere instruments in the hands of God. And to bring home this truth to the mind of Arjuna, the Lord reveals Himself to him in His universal form (Chapter XI). It is natural for one placed as Arjuna was to have the doubt still lingering in his mind as to which of the two paths is better, viz. that of the worship of the *अचर* (Imperishable) and *अव्यक्त* (Unmanifested) or that of the worship of the Lord with steadfastness. To this plain question the Lord gives a plain and straight answer, viz. that those who worship God are the best Yogis, while those who worship the Unmanifest follow a difficult path, although they also verily reach the Supreme Goal.

One would suppose that such a plain answer is incapable of being misunderstood or misconstrued. But various commentators have somehow managed to raise a huge storm of controversy as to the real significance of the Lord's teaching, distinct from the plain and apparent meaning.

We must resist the temptation of entering the lists, and as we have pointed out above, it is an unwarranted misreading of the Gita to interpret it as any particular system of philosophy, or as advocating exclusively any one or other of the various paths prescribed to the spiritual aspirant by the different religions of the world. This conclusion gets a strong corroboration if we but examine the qualifications of the "dear ones" as given in the verses 13 to 20 of Chapter XII which are as follows:— "He who hates no creature, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of 'me and mine,' even-minded in pain and pleasure, and forbearing, ever content and steady in meditation, self-controlled, possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on me,—he who is thus devoted to Me, is dear to Me. He by whom the world is not agitated and who cannot be agitated by the world, freed from joy, envy fear and anxiety,—he is dear to Me. He who is free from dependence, who is pure, prompt, unconcerned, untroubled, renouncing every undertaking,—he who is thus devoted to Me, is dear to Me. He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, renouncing good and evil,—he who is full of devotion, is dear to Me. He who is the same to friend and foe, and also in honour and dishonour, the same in heat and cold, in pleasure and pain, free from attachment, to whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, full of devotion,—that man is dear to Me. And they who follow this Immortal Dharma, as described above, endued with Sradhdhá, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, and devoted,—they are exceedingly dear to Me."

No arguments of ours are needed to commend this

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"Immortal Dharma" (as the Lord describes it Himself) to all spiritual aspirants to whatever creed, or church, or denomination they may owe their allegiance. The word 'Me' used in these verses does not refer to the Lord in the particular aspect of Sri Krishna, but the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Uninfluenced by the opinions of commentators, the unsophisticated common-sense would have no difficulty whatsoever in understanding how this "Immortal Dharma" must be the goal to all whichever path they may be following. The man of action (Karma Yogin), the devotee (Bhakta) and the man of wisdom (Jnani) must all endeavour to reach this goal, and to the extent to which the followers of the various religions realise this Dharma in their lives will all fanaticism and fights in the name of religion disappear, and the reign of universal peace and harmony will be inaugurated in the world.

A CHAPTER IN THE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT OF INDIA.

BY MANI BHUSHAN MAJUMDAR, M.A., B.L.

When India was at the height of her glory, the great sages sang the Vedic hymns, and there was peace and prosperity in all the spheres of her life. At that time flourished such poet-seers as Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, such philosophers as Kapila and Gautama and such astronomers as Aryabhatta and Bhaskaracharya, and they exercised a great influence throughout the country. Then the high spiritual culture as embodied in the Upanishads was the key-note of Indian life, communal or individual. But during the Buddhistic period when the Vedic religion was on the decline, a readjustment was badly needed. And the great teacher Sankaracharya was born, and he infused life and strength into society by rehabilitating the religion of the Vedas. Subse-

quently when the Mohammedans were the rulers of India, we see such religious and social reformers as Nanak, Guru Govinda, Kabir and Sri Chaitanya, such poets as Jayadeva, Vidyapati, Chandidasa, Mirabai and Tulsidasa. At the decline of the Mohammedan sovereignty in India when the British became the rulers, many prominent persons who did much for the good of the country, were also born. Of them it may be said without any fear of contradiction that Raja Rammohan Roy was the greatest. We shall describe here the socio-religious movement inaugurated by him in Bengal.

It was at the time when Warren Hastings was the first Governor-general of India that Raja Rammohan Roy was born. Then India, specially Bengal, was passing through a great religious and social crisis. The Hindus in general almost gave up the study of the Vedas, the treasure-house of the highest wisdom and culture. Various superstitions reigned supreme, and the people cared more for outward formalities than for the essence of religion. Even in his teens Raja Rammohan felt the depth of the degeneration of his country and tried by various ways to reform the Hindu religion and society. He wrote a book, denouncing the popular form of image-worship which was soul-less and lacked in the genuine spirit. His criticisms in the book were directed not against the fundamental principles of Hinduism as such but against the degenerated and perverted forms they had assumed in the hands of the ignorant people. He tried to show that image-worship as practised in those days was crude and far away from the lofty teachings of the Upanishads.

In his childhood the Raja had a great faith in the existing religion. He used to adore his family deity and would not take even a drop of water without going through a chapter from the Srimad Bhagavatam. He wore the sacred thread worn by the first three castes of the Hindus even up to his death. He had a great passion for learning, learnt Arabic and Persian and studied the works of Euclid and Aristotle in the Arabic language. Besides, he read the Koran and the works of

some Mohammedan poets, which had a close affinity to the teachings of Plato and Vedanta. All this study influenced him a great deal and brought about a great change in his earlier religious views. And he became a rebel against the form of religion that was current at that time. For this open revolt the whole country stood against him and tried to thwart him at every step. But the Raja was firm in his convictions and went on undaunted with his work of reform.

The methods adopted by him for religious propaganda were as follows :—(1) the conversation and discussion of the higher religious ideas, (2) the establishment of model schools and such other educational institutions, (3) the publication of religious literature, (4) and the convening of religious meetings. He wrote out in Bengali a commentary on the Vedanta Sutras of Vyasa, which are otherwise called the Brahma Sutras. About the respective claims of Jnana (knowledge) and Karma (work) in religious life, there had ever been a great dispute ; and in order to come to a satisfactory solution as to the real import of the Vedas on these points, Vyasa, an exponent of Vedanta, propounded the Vedanta Sutras. Long after, Sankaracharya wrote a commentary on these Sutras, expounding and illucidating the Vedanta philosophy from a purely monistic standpoint. Raja Rammohan's commentary of the Vedanta Sutras had as its basis the commentaries of Sankaracharya. Of course, he interpreted them in his own way, to suit his own ends. His idea of religion consisted in the adoration of the formless Brahman, having infinite attributes ; and he tried to propagate this religion amongst all. This was really the genesis of the religious movement, subsequently known as the Brahma Dharma that exerted a great influence upon the intellectual circle of India, specially of Bengal in the past.

According to the Raja, the formless Brahman with attributes is the real object of adoration, and only those who are not advanced in religious life, take the help of images. Brahman is beyond our senses, and we cannot

perceive Him through our sense-organs. Forms are destructible, while He is eternal. Forms are limited by space and time, while He is infinite and all-pervading. In his commentary on the Brahma Sutras, the Raja illucidated all these points. The treatise, being written in Bengali, served as a powerful impetus for the propagation of his religious ideas, and the people began to be interested in the study of the Vedas which were being much neglected at that time. He subsequently compiled another book called the Vedanta-Sara which is rather a summary of his former work. Everywhere he emphasised the worship of this formless aspect of Brahman as is also inculcated by the Sruti in some such words:—"You are to adore only the Atman. The learned should not worship anything else. He who worships only Brahman is even adored by the gods and is not born again. God is the Self of the universe. The attributes of God cannot be known. We can know Him only when we look about the universe which is His projection. God is the Ultimate Truth beyond which there is no truth. Maya is His power. The universe has no other foundation except God. Knowledge apart from Him is ignorance." The Raja tried to present before his countrymen these lofty ideals of the Vedanta philosophy. Besides, he showed that both Jnana and Karma have their place in spiritual life and are necessary for salvation.

Then, another work done by the Raja was the translation into Bengali of some of the principal Upanishads, as also the publication of a critical study of the Bible and of the Koran for the benefit of the Christians and Moham-medans respectively. He was liberal in his religious views and ever believed that there are truths in all religions, leading man ultimately to one goal. The difference between a Hindu who believes in Brahman and a mono-theistic Christian is not fundamental according to him. The former recognises the authority of the Vedic truths, while the latter regards Jesus as the Messiah and Saviour of mankind. Again, like all Hindus, the Raja recognised the necessity of the Guru or the teacher in spiritual life,

and he said that in accordance with the teachings of the scriptures everyone should select a worthy Guru to quicken his spiritual potentialities. Knowing the usefulness of devotional songs, he introduced them in the worship of Brahman (ब्रह्मोपासना).

We know from history as also from a defunct contemporary magazine started by the Raja that the British rulers observed religious toleration during the first thirty years of their advent in India. But subsequently the European missionaries who came to this land in great numbers, began to convert the Hindus and the Moham-medans by adopting all sorts of unfair means. They published books, containing unfounded allegations and blemishes of the Hindu and Mohammedan religions. They began to deliver speeches in public places, denouncing Hinduism and Islam and extolling Christianity. Besides, they began to convert people who were poor by tempting them with such things as government service or the like. Rammohan Roy raised a note of vehement protest against such unfair practices and turned the tide of the country by diverting the attention of the people to the sacred books of antiquity and the culture they represented. But he was not blind to the intrinsic merit of the Christian religion. In fact, he collected the teachings of Christ and published a book named 'Precepts of Jesus—a Guide to Peace and Happiness.' But unfortunately none appreciated the great religious toleration of the Raja at the time. Not to speak of his countrymen, even the Christian missionaries became his enemies for publishing the above book. For, in it the miracles, divinity and vicariousness of Jesus Christ did not find any place. In reply to the abuses of the missionaries, he issued some appeals to the Christian public in which he tried to show that this triad is not the essential part of the Bible. He supported his views by quotations from the original Greek and Hebrew Bible.

Now the Raja felt the necessity of a public place of worship where the people would gather and join in a common prayer. So in the Bengali month of Bhadra of

1828 a house was hired for the purpose in Calcutta. The gathering was called Brahma Sabha or Brahma Samaj. Subsequently a site was purchased, and a permanent house having been built the Samaj was formally opened in the month of Magh of the following year. The first anniversary of the Samaj was celebrated in Bhadra, and on that occasion many Brahmin Pandits were invited. The aims and objects of this new religious association were noble and catholic as we can gather from its trust-deed drafted by the Raja himself. The Samaj was established "for the worship and adoration of the Eternal and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the universe, but not under or by any other name, designation, or title, used for and applied to any particular being or beings, by any man or set of men." Men of any and every religion were free to meet there. It was "a place of public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people, without distinction as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner." "There could be no picture or idol, there could be no animal sacrifice or oblation of any kind. There could be no eating and drinking and no use of vulgar language in the prayer-hall and that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer or hymns be delivered, made or used in such worship but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue and strengthening of the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds." That he founded a religious congregation for universal worship retaining the Hindu character and stamp of religion was the originality and signal merit of the great Raja. He invited Brahmins for reciting the Vedic hymns in the prayer-hall and established a Vedic school in Calcutta.

(To be continued.)

INNER AWAKENING.*

BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA.

In all the holy scriptures and teachings of great prophets, we find the same call to the struggling, ignorant soul. It comes from the lips of Jesus, of Gautama Buddha and of the Vedic sages. It is a call to awake, arise and sleep no more. What does it mean? Are we not already awake? Do we not see the universe as it really is? No. Not in the strict sense of the term. We are asleep to the Reality. We are awake to the unreal. We know the universe as it is interpreted to us by our senses. We do not know it in its true nature. We live in the domain of the senses, and to us the Spirit is a non-entity. Truly has it been said by Sri Krishna in the Gita, "In that which is night to all beings, the self-controlled man wakes. That in which all beings are awake, is night to the Self-seeing Muni." The ignorant man hugs the changing, fleeting shadows of life and is subject to the rounds of birth and death, pain and suffering until he regains his higher consciousness, sees the birthless, changeless and immortal Divine Spirit within and gets freedom. The majority of mankind are thus living a life of ignorance and bondage. And therefore is this call—a call to wake up and get free.

I will quote to you the part of a song which served as an awakener to Gautama Buddha while he was engrossed in his palatial enjoyments. The song occurs in the original life of the saviour, and it has been aptly translated by Sir Edwin Arnold. It runs as follows:—

"What pleasure hast thou of thy changeless bliss?
Nay, if love lasted, there were joy in this;
But life's way is the wind's way, all these things
Are but brief voices breathed on shifting strings.

* Notes of a lecture delivered at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, U. S. A.

Yet mock we while we wail, for could they know
This life they cling to is but empty show ;
'Twere all as well to bid a cloud to stand,
Or hold a running river with the hand.

But thou that art to save, thine hour is nigh !
The sad world waiteth in its misery,
The blind world stumbleth on its round of pain ;
Rise, Maya's child ! wake ! slumber not again !"

"Rise, wake, slumber not again."—This is the voice he heard. The biographer has put it in a dramatic form. The great Buddha was asleep with his beautiful young wife ; and while he was dreaming a dream of earthly enjoyment, there he heard some ethereal voice singing thus to him—"Rise, wake, slumber not again." And there is a deep meaning behind it. It was his own voice that he heard. It was a voice from within. He was going to lose himself in the fleeting pleasures of the world. But soon there came a turn in his life, and he discovered their futility and worthlessness by the light of discrimination. Are these real? Where do all these lead to? And he found out that all these are shortlived, ever eluding our grasp. "The life they cling to is but empty show ; it were all as well to bid a cloud to stand, or hold a running river with the hand."

If we read the lives of the great saints and sages of the world, we find that each of them heard the same voice from within, in some form or other. And each one of us must thus sooner or later get the impulse for spiritual awakening from within.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत्

आत्मेव छात्सनी बभूव आत्मेव रिपुनात्मनः ।

—"A man should uplift himself by his own self, so let him not weaken this self. For, this self alone is the friend as well as the enemy of oneself." We are our own friends, we are our own enemies. We have been given reason that we might use it properly to know what is real from what is unreal. In order that we may raise and elevate ourselves, we must have the power of dis-

crimination, Viveka. When this Viveka arises, we find that all this life we cling to is but an empty show.

That is the beginning of religion. That is the beginning of inner awakening. Let us not be carried away by the currents of our paltry desires and impulses ; but let us pause and reflect on the highest object, the supreme goal of our life. In fact, if we closely analyse our minds, we find that mainly we hanker after three things. First, we want immortality ; secondly, we want perfect knowledge ; and thirdly, we want unalloyed bliss. But the way we are trying to get them is wrong, and that is why we go round and round and suffer. We cannot have rest until and unless we realise our immortal existence, until and unless we have perfect knowledge and peace that passeth all understanding. Why do we want all that? The Vedanta replies, because that is inherent in our very being. In reality, we are सच्चिदानन्द—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, we are Divinity itself. But somehow or other, we have forgotten what we really are. Hence, consciously or unconsciously, this urge for the realisation of our true nature, back of all our strivings, back of all our endeavours. The Soul or God has been defined by Vedanta as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, and the goal also has been spoken of as the same. Religion begins when, instead of blindly pursuing it outside in the little, finite things of the world, we seek it within ourselves. And hence the call of the great scriptures of the world—'Seek ye first the kingdom of God within.' Thus, we have to wake up to the domain of the Spirit by giving up the life of the senses that we are adhering to.

Almost all the religions of the world agree that this world that we see is but an empty show. Beyond it there is that which is real. "Give up all and follow Me"—that is the one self-same teaching of all the great prophets and saviours of mankind. "This world is nothing. God is the only reality." Seek Him and Him alone, and you will find peace. The one condition given by all religions is to renounce the world, and then only can God be

realised. But this great truth has often been misunderstood. That is why most of us, though we might suffer, do not care for religion, because we find it so difficult to renounce. It reminds one of the story, that while a mosquito was sitting on the nose of a person and troubling him, his friend in order to relieve him shot at it and thus killed both the man and the mosquito. "Renounce the world," this teaching, if we take it literally, will not give us the solution of the problem. It will be like killing both the man and the mosquito. And how can you give up the world? Wherever you go, the world will follow you. You have caught the Tartar, as the saying goes. The Tartar won't leave you even if you want to leave him.

In Vedanta we find the true explanation and solution. The ideal of renunciation nowhere attains such a height as in the teachings of the Vedanta. Yet the Vedanta does not mean that we should flee away from our duties and the responsibilities of the world. Renunciation of the world really means deification of the world. Let us deify it. Let us know that it is God Himself that is manifest everywhere. One of the oldest Upanishads begins with the verse, ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् — "Whatever exists in this universe is to be covered with the Lord." Thus what we should do is to change our outlook upon life by covering everything with the Lord. Let us see Him in all and everywhere. You may have your wife. It does not mean that you have to abandon her. You are to see God in her. You may have children. Will you give them up? Will you turn them out of doors? Certainly not. That is not religion. See God in your children. So, in everything. In life and in death, in happiness and in misery, God is equally present. The whole world is full of His presence. Open your eyes, and see Him. This is what Vedanta teaches. The world we have been thinking of so long, the world to which we have been clinging on so long, is a false world, is a world of our own imagination. Let us open our eyes and see that it is only apparent, not real. What is real is the Lord Him-

self. It is He who is in the child, in the wife and in the husband. He is in everything and everywhere. Let us feel it. Thus and thus alone can we avoid the dangers of life and its evils.

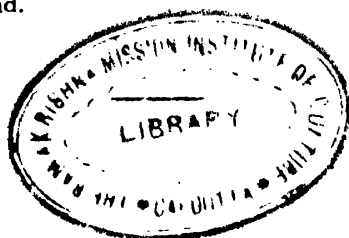
We should not desire anything other than God, for it is the root-cause of all misery. What does it mean? Let us have all we want, nay, even more; but let us not hold the idea of ownership. The moment you label anything as your own, you create misery. All belongs to the Lord, because the scriptures call us to see the Lord in everything. If you see God in your every movement, in your every action, in your conversation, nay, in everything, all becomes metamorphosed. Then the whole scene changes, and the world instead of appearing as a bondage will become a great help to your realisation of the Ideal.

It is very easy to talk of seeing God everywhere and in everything. But when we go to practise it in life, we find ourselves wanting. From our childhood we have been taught to see God everywhere. Your own Bible teaches that. But as you go out in the street, perhaps a stronger man knocks you down, and you rise up with a closed fist. Instead of meeting God, you encounter the devil. You forget the teaching. You have all read that story in the *Æsop's Fables*, how a stag was boasting of his strength before his young one, and as soon as he heard the barking of dogs in the distance, he made a bolt and ran away several miles. When he came back to his young one, it asked him, "You just told me how strong and powerful you were. How was it that when the dogs barked, you ran away?" "Yes, my child. But when the dogs bark all my confidence vanishes," replied the stag. Such is the case with most of us. When the dogs of trial and temptations bark at us, we are like the stag in the Fable.

But we need not despair. There are people in this world who have actually realised the Ideal, and they demonstrate the truth and practicability of these teachings. I will just speak of one, a householder disciple of

Sri Ramakrishna. He was known as Nag Mahashaya. A simple incident of his life will show how he had practically lived the life. Once as he was lying in bed, a cat jumped on him and badly scratched his face. He said it was the Lord Himself who came to have fun with him. And he would not even apply any medicine to cure his wound, for the wound reminded him of the Lord. Is not the Lord equally present in happiness and in misery?
 आत्मा वा अरे श्रोतव्यो मन्त्रव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः— "This Self is first to be heard, then to be understood and then meditated upon." Hear about It first ; then think upon It day and night, till the idea enters into your heart of hearts, into your brains, into your very veins. Out of such thought, out of the fulness of heart, the mouth speaketh, and the hand works too.

"It is thought which is the propelling force in us. Fill the mind with the highest thoughts, hear them day after day, think them month after month. Never mind failures ; they are quite natural, they are the beauty of life, these failures. What would life be without them? It would not be worth having if it were not for struggles. Where would be the poetry of life? Never mind the struggles, the mistakes. Hold the ideal a thousand times, and if you fail a thousand times, make the attempt once more. The ideal of man is to see God in everything. But if you cannot see Him in everything, see Him in one thing, in that thing which you like best, and then see Him in another. So on you can go. There is infinite life before the soul. Take your own time and you will achieve the end."



THE SOCIAL REFORM IN INDIA.

During the Congress week at Belgaum, the All-India Social Conference, too, held its annual session under the presidency of Sir C. Sankaran Nair, an old veteran in the ranks of public life and social reform. In the course of his presidential address, he laid special emphasis on the emancipation of women and the elevation of the depressed classes. Referring to the position of women in ancient times, he is reported to have said that "light has been thrown by archæological discoveries showing that not only there were no restrictions of relationship on sexual union, but women were men's equals both socially and politically." He also urged the enfranchisement of women and the putting of them on a footing of equality with men in respect to holding of positions and public offices.

Most of the educated classes in India would readily accept the need for the removal of all unjust and cruel disabilities of women and also their right for equal opportunity for education, culture and self-expression. But we are afraid, the mere giving of votes, the removal of restrictions in respect to marriage etc. alone, even in those countries where the militant suffragettes have secured the maximum success, have not proved to be an unmixed blessing. Whatever be the case with respect to those countries ; with regard to India, any slavish imitation of the forms and ideals of the West will surely sound the death-knell of her spiritual civilisation which alone can bring about peace and harmony in the world. We stand for full freedom, for the growth and expression of the personality of women, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual, and at the same time we feel it our duty to resist all attempts to introduce in our country the type of the modern militant unwomanly woman of the West.

Speaking of the depressed classes, Sir Sankaran Nair says that they must have power of vote and that they

must be able to carry out legislation which might interfere with the vested interests of the caste Hindus and of the Brahmins in particular, but which are called in the interest of social progress and civilisation. Particularly interesting and noteworthy are the following observations, and we earnestly hope that they will attract the responsible politicians of the country. Sir Sankaran observes—"In none of the schemes for Home Rule that have been put forward have I traced any recognition of this fact. On the other hand, I have found that the proposals made by responsible leaders are often calculated consciously or otherwise to enhance the powers of those who are likely to use them against the interests of the lower classes."

"Ages long in want and pain
Have toiled they for others' gain."

Speaking of the caste system, he holds it responsible for the downfall of the Hindus, and adds that it is retarding our progress towards Home Rule. His remarks about the non-Brahmin movement deserve special attention. He declared—"I am a non-Brahmin myself, we non-Brahmins are determined that no disabilities imposed by the caste system shall stand in the way of our social and political progress, and for this purpose we are determined to see that no powers are conferred on those who maintain the validity of the caste system, without larger powers being conferred upon those who may suffer thereby to counteract the influence." Excellent principle, and most unexceptionable too! Nobody who is acquainted with the history of the non-Brahmin movement can accept that these have any relation to the actual facts. The non-Brahmins, the majority of them at least, are as much caste-ridden as the Brahmins, and where the interests of the depressed classes are concerned, they are the most determined opponents of reform; for, they form the vast bulk of the landed aristocracy and all other forms of vested interest. We would only wish that the wise principle which Sir Sankaran Nair enunciates will find acceptance at the hands of the non-Brahmin leaders of India.

One other point deserves mention, and it is this. Sir Sankaran quotes with approval for the admiration of his audience the fact that His Excellency Mustapha Kamal abolished not only the Khilafat but also did away with all religious text-books and teachings of the Koran from schools. The Chairman of the Reception Committee also was equally vehement against caste and religion. Everybody is familiar with the fact that certain abuses and anomalies have crept into these institutions. But what we fail to understand is that the majority of the social reformers would like to abolish these altogether. It is needless to argue how religion is the very life and backbone of our race and culture, and it is useless to argue with a class of people to whom religion is what a red rag is to a bull. For ourselves, we favour every scheme of social reform which would not lay violent hands on the deep-rooted, healthy and noble religious instincts of our people.

“A Hindu.”

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 38.)

नवैकादशपञ्चव्रीन्भावान्भूतेषु येन वै ॥

ईक्षेतार्थैकमप्येषु तज्ज्ञानं मम निश्चितम् ॥ १४ ॥

14. I consider that as knowledge by means of which one sees the nine,¹ the eleven,² the five³ and the three⁴ things in beings, and also sees the One in all these beings.

[1 Nine—Prakriti, Purusha, Mahat (Cosmic Intelligence), Ahamkara (Ego), and the five Tanmatras (fine matter).

2 Eleven—five organs of action, five organs of knowledge, and Manas (mind).

3 Five—the elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether.

4 Three—The Gunas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

By means of knowledge one sees the multiple universe as not essentially distinct from the Brahman, the Supreme Cause. This is the idea.]

एतदेव हि विज्ञानं न तथैकेन येन यत् ॥

स्थित्युत्पत्त्यप्ययान्पश्येद्भावानां त्रिगुणात्मनाम् ॥ १५ ॥

15. This very knowledge becomes realisation when¹ one no more sees things pervaded by the One as before. One should see that things composed of the three Gunas are subject to origin, continuity and dissolution.

[1 *When &c.*—When he sees only the Brahman, and not the multiplicity. The line is too elliptical.]

आदावन्ते च मध्ये च सृज्यात्सृज्यं यदन्वियात् ॥

पुनस्तत्प्रतिसंक्रमे यच्छिष्येत तदेव सत् ॥ १६ ॥

16. That which, when one object¹ is transformed into another, abides at its beginning, middle and end, and remains when those objects return to their cause,—is verily the Real.²

[1 *Object*—literally, effect. Every object is an effect, Brahman being the cause.

2 *Real*—one should see that the Brahman alone is eternal in an ever-changing world.]

श्रुतिः प्रत्यक्षमैतिह्यमनुमानं चतुष्टयम् ॥

प्रमाणेष्वनवस्थानाद्विकल्पात् स विरज्यते ॥ १७ ॥

17. Vedic texts, direct perception, tradition and inference,—these are the four proofs of knowledge. Since this everchanging phenomenal world does not stand¹ the test of these, the wise man turns away from it.

[1 *Does not stand &c.*—Vedic texts—such as, 'Multiplicity is a fiction.' *Direct perception*—e.g. a cloth never exists apart from the threads that go to make it; similarly the world does not exist apart from the Atman. *Tradition*—big authorities have declared the unreality of the world. *Inference*—e.g. the universe must be unreal, for it is a mere phenomenon like silver in a mother-of-pearl.]

कर्मणां परिणामित्वादाविरिञ्चादमङ्गलम् ॥

विपश्चिन्नश्वरं पश्येददृष्टमपि दृष्टवत् ॥ १८ ॥

18. Since all work¹ is subject to change, the wise man should look upon unseen happiness² also, even in the

sphere of Brahmâ, as misery and transient, just like the happiness we experience here below.

[1 *Work &c.*—it can never produce eternal results.

2 *Unseen happiness*—which one gets in heaven acquired through work.]

भक्तियोगः पुरैवोक्तः प्रीयमानाय तेऽनघ ॥

पुनश्च कथयिष्यामि मद्भक्तेः कारणं परम् ॥ १६ ॥

19. O sinless one, I have already expounded the philosophy of devotion to thee, but since thou hast taken a fancy to it, I shall again describe the chief means to the attainment of devotion to Me.

श्रद्धामृतकथायां मे शश्वन्मदनुकीर्तनम् ॥

परिनिष्ठा च पूजायां स्तुतिभिः स्तवनं मम ॥ २० ॥

20. A constant¹ regard for the wonderfully sweet tales of My deeds, expounding them to others after hearing, attachment to the worship of Me, and praising Me with hymns.

[1 *Constant*—this epithet is to be repeated in all the succeeding phrases.]

आदरः परिचर्यायां सर्वाङ्गैरभिवन्दनम् ॥

मद्भक्तपूजाभ्यधिका सर्वभूतेषु मन्मतिः ॥ २१ ॥

21. Delight in service unto Me, making prostrations before Me, worshipping My devotees—which is even greater than the worship of Me—and looking upon all beings as Myself.

मदर्थेष्वङ्गचेष्टा च वचसा मद्गुणेरणम् ॥

मय्यर्पणं च मनसः सर्वकामविचर्जनम् ॥ २२ ॥

22. Moving the limbs so as to serve Me, recapitulating My attributes through speech, surrendering the mind unto Me and banishing all desires from it.

मदर्थेऽर्थपरित्यागो भोगस्य च सुखस्य च ॥

इष्टं दत्तं हुतं जप्तं मदर्थं यद्व्रतं तपः ॥ २३ ॥

23. Giving up riches, enjoyment and happiness for My sake ; making sacrifices, gifts and Homa,¹ repeating My name, undertaking vows and austerities,—all for My sake.²

[1 *Homa*—offering of oblations in the sacred fire.

² *For My sake*—Every act may be conducive to devotion if only it is performed for the sake of the Lord.]

एवं धर्मेर्मुन्याणामुद्धवात्मनिवेदिनाम् ॥

मयि संजायते भक्तिः कोऽन्योऽर्थोऽस्यावशिष्यते ॥ २४ ॥

24. O Uddhava, by such pious acts men who have surrendered themselves unto Me acquire devotion to Me. What other¹ objects remain to be achieved by such devotees?

[1 *What other &c.*—Devotion perfectly satisfies the aspirant.]

यदात्मन्यर्पितं चित्तं शान्तं सत्त्वोपबृंहितम् ॥

धर्मं ज्ञानं सवैराग्यमैश्वर्यं चाभिपद्यते ॥ २५ ॥

25. When the mind, pacified and enriched with Sattva,¹ is surrendered unto Me the Atman, the devotee attains to religion, knowledge, dispassion and extraordinary powers.

[1 *Sattva*—balance of mind, with which are associated such qualities as purity, a capacity to illumine a subject, etc.]

यदर्पितं तद्विकल्पे इन्द्रियैः परिधावति ॥

रजस्वलं चासन्निष्टं चित्तं विद्धि विपर्ययम् ॥ २६ ॥

26. But when that mind, placed on sense-objects, pursues them by means of the organs, it becomes *Rajasika*,¹ and attached to unreal things ; whence, thou must know, proceed the very reverse² of the above four qualities.

[1 *Rajasika*—engrossed in activity.

² *Reverse &c.*—i.e. irreligion, ignorance, attachment and impotence.]

धर्मो मद्भक्तिकृतोक्तो ज्ञानं चैकात्म्यदर्शनम् ॥

गुणेष्वसङ्गो वैराग्यमैश्वर्यं चाणिमादयः ॥ २७ ॥

27. That religion is called¹ the best which makes for devotion to Me ; knowledge is the realisation of the unity of Self ; dispassion is non-attachment to sense-objects ; and extraordinary powers comprise extreme minuteness and so forth.

[In this verse the Lord explains in His own way the four virtues mentioned in verse 24.

¹ Called—in the Vaishnava scriptures.]

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

THE WONDER-CHILD.—By C. Jinarajadasa. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 78. Price Re. 1.

This nicely got up brochure, written in a poetic style, is a sequel to the author's 'Flowers and Gardens' already published. It has been aptly dedicated to the Divine Child who came to Bethlehem and Brindaban. It proposes to bring out the secret of Indian politics in the light of the teachings of the Vedanta which believes in the inborn Divinity of every man.

The Wonder-Child by which name the book has been styled, is none other than every citizen, man or woman, whether law-abiding or law-breaking. As the author says—"Each of you, whether good or bad, is a Wonder-Child. Long, long before you knew anything of life and its miseries you lived in a Land of Light, full of joy and eager response to all that was true and beautiful. You were that Light ; it was your essence and substance. Always round you, through you, and beyond you, was that Light, charged with Power, radiating Joy, reaching out to you with an ineffable Love which encircled you in its everlasting arms."

But by the inscrutable power of Maya, as we all see, the Wonder-Child descends into darkness, and there come into being in the world bondage and misery, sin and crime. What then is the remedy? As the author

suggests, the remedy lies not in condemning and applying punishment for the breach of a law, but in understanding why the Light has been powerless in the child of man. Only those who have the supreme characteristics of love and understanding and are themselves the embodiments of the law, can be the rulers of man, for they will judge the law-breaker from within and not from without, even as a mother judges the babe.

Politics, regulated on these noble principles, is what is known as Rajadharma, and its enunciator is the Dharmaraja Himself, the Divine Child. In these days of wide-spreading national chaos and unrest what is needed is the enforcement everywhere of such a political philosophy.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.—By Chandra Chakravarty. Published by the Susruta Sangha, 177, Raja Dinendra Street, Calcutta. Pp. 201. Price Re. 1-8.

The book under review presents a bird's-eye view of the United States of America and their people. The subjects dealt with are : (1) Physiography of the U.S.A., (2) Historical Background, (3) Government, (4) People, (5) Industries, (6) Education, and (7) Social Organisation. As we go through the book, we come across a graphic description of the American life, considered from the Hindu standpoint. The statements and arguments have been substantiated by facts and figures that often speak more eloquently than rhetoric.

As the author spent a pretty long period covering over fourteen years of his life in America, what he has written has been written from first-hand experience, and as such the book has a value and interest of its own.

THE UPANISHADS (Vol. 1. Second Edition).—Edited by H. R. Bhagavat, B.A. Published by Ashtekar & Co., Poona. Pp. 132. Price Rs. 2-8.

This is the first volume of the 'Collective Series' of works undertaken by Messrs. Ashtekar & Co., of Poona. It contains Isha, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Tattiriya and Aitareya Upanishads—Sanskrit text,

English translation and notes. There is no doubt that the volume will be valuable for those who, while reading the original texts of the Upanishads, do not like to go through the difficult, elaborate and learned commentaries thereto.

But we must point out here that the notes, given for an elucidation and a clear understanding of the texts, have not been sufficient as promised in the preface ; they have rather been few and far between.

KRISHNA (Second Revised Edition).—By Bhavagan Das. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 112. Price : Board Re. 1/- ; wrapper As. 12.

The book before us proposes to be a study in the theory of the Avatars, specially of the Avatara, Sri Krishna. As is mentioned in the prefatory note, some years ago the author had the occasion of reading a paper on the life and character of Sri Krishna before some students of the Allahabad University on their Janmastami celebration. The paper was printed in many journals and highly appreciated by the public. On account of the demand for it again, the author has revised and enlarged it and presented it in a book-form.

As is usual with all the writings of Babu Bhagavan Das, the book has been a learned one, full of deep thinking and extensive reading, and is illustrated with apt quotations from the Hindu scriptures. The theory of the Avatars, a knotty metaphysical problem, has been nicely dealt with in the light of modern science. Above all, the wonderful personality of Sri Krishna, at once complex and anomalous, has been duly considered in its different aspects. We recommend the book to the Hindu public.

By A. Christina Albers :—

(1) **NURJAHAN.**—Published by the Calcutta University Press, Calcutta. Pp. 251.

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- (2) ANCIENT TALES OF HINDUSTAN.—Published by the author from 29, Beniapukur Road, Calcutta. Pp. 105.
- (3) YOGMAYA AND OTHER DRAMATIC POEMS.—Published by the author from 29, Beniapukur Road, Calcutta. Pp. 111.
- (4) HIMALAYAN WHISPERS.—Published by the author from 29, Beniapukur Road, Calcutta. Pp. 47.

Many are of opinion that the East is East and the West is West, and the two can never meet. In a sense, the two have never been able to come together so closely as to have a perfect mutual understanding. But that the difficulties are not insurmountable can be demonstrated by the few honourable instances of Westerners exhibiting remarkable insight into the deeper realities of the Eastern life. One such instance is that of the author of these books before us.

In all these writings the one remarkable feature that stands out prominently is that the writer has been able to enter into the spirit of the topics or scenes described, that her foreign origin, training and ways of life are so far left in the background as to make one feel that it is an Indian who is speaking through these lines. Of course, here and there, we get glimpses of the author's nationality in some particular images used in the poems.

(1) In the 'NURJAHAN', a collection of dramatic poems, the stories of Nurjahan, Savitri, Damayanti and the Great Drought or the story of Rishya Sringa are skilfully dramatised.

(2) In the 'ANCIENT TALES OF HINDUSTAN', the Puranic stories of Sri Krishna, Dhruva, Prahlada, Vikramaditya and Eckaloba are told in an easy, flowing verse.

(3) In the first piece of the 'YOGMAYA AND OTHER DRAMATIC POEMS', the *pros* and *cons* of the spiritual life, the trials and difficulties that the aspirant has to face and overcome, the urgency of sincerity and steadfastness in the struggle towards the ideal which are sure to be rewarded with success—these and other similar things are painted with insight and sympathy. The 'Opoorani'

—the Fairy Queen', the second dramatic piece in the same collection, is a play for children, representing the triumph of good over evil. In the 'Mermaid's Dream', the third piece, the glories of forgiveness, suffering and self-sacrifice are depicted. And in the 'Moon-Maiden,' the fourth and last, the superiority of pure wisdom to riches and enjoyments forms the subject-matter.

(4) In the 'HIMALAYAN WHISPERS', we are presented with fine, delicate sketches which reveal a true imaginativeness and a bright mystic faculty, bringing delight to ones' heart. It is difficult to single out particular passages for illustration, but we may mention here the poems, 'Snowy Heights,' 'In the Zenana', 'To the Indian Lady who died at the age of seventeen' etc as instances in point.

(By Swami Abhedananda. Published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, 11, Eden Hospital Road, Calcutta).

(1) SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HIS WORK.—Pp. 34. Price As. 3.

This pamphlet contains a lecture delivered by Swami Abhedanandaji, in March 1903, before a large and sympathetic audience in Carnegie Lyceum, New York, U. S. A. It is a brief but appreciative survey of the wonderful career of the great Swami Vivekananda in India, Europe and America. As the lecturer is one who had opportunities of living and moving with Swamiji very intimately for years together under varying circumstances, he has been able to add a rare touch of feeling and interest in the sketch he has drawn.

(2) HUMAN AFFECTION AND DIVINE LOVE (Second Edition). Pp. 46. Price : Paper cover As. 8 ; cloth Re. 1.

A philosophical discourse on love in a lucid and charming style.

(3) WHY A HINDU ACCEPTS CHRIST AND REJECTS CHURCHIANITY (Fourth Edition).—Pp. 17. Price As. 1½.

A lecture giving a rational exposition of the teachings

of Christ and a just criticism of the modern Christian Church and its evils.

- (4) **SWAMI ABHEDANANDA IN INDIA** (Vol. I., Part I.).—Pp. 96. Price As. 8.

The book records the descriptive accounts of the memorable tour and the lectures of Swami Abhedanandaji in India after his return from the West in 1906. We find therein a nice interpretation of Vedanta in the light of our present environments and altered conditions of life.

- (5) **DOES THE SOUL EXIST AFTER DEATH?** (Sixth Edition)—Pp. 20. Price As. 1½.

A lecture dealing philosophically with the vital problem of the existence of the soul after the dissolution of the physical body.

NEWS AND NOTES.

THE PASSING AWAY OF GOLAP MA.

With deep regret we have to announce to our readers the passing away of Golap Ma, one of the foremost lady disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and a devoted attendant and companion of the Holy Mother. The unfortunate event took place on Friday, the 19th December, 1924, at 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, the Calcutta residence of the Holy Mother, where she used to live for the last so many years. By her death we have lost an advanced soul—a kindly, genial person who had a sweet word and a loving welcome to one and all the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. She was known to have heart trouble, and it was this malady attended with several other complaints that at last proved fatal and took her away. Peacefully she left her mortal body and joined her Lord in the realm of eternal bliss.

About the main incidents of her life, the following brief account may be interesting: Golap Ma became a

widow rather early in life and had an only daughter who had been married to a respectable zemindar family of Calcutta. As it was natural enough, she had her whole heart and affection centred upon this daughter. But even this solace of her life was snatched away by the cruel hand of death, and Golap Ma became immersed in sorrow. Just about this time a lady friend and neighbour, who afterwards come to be known as Yogin Ma, talked to her about Sri Ramakrishna, the God-intoxicated man living at Dakshineswar. With earnestness and sincerity and an aching heart, Golap Ma went to see Sri Ramakrishna, and found to her great surprise that he had been almost expecting her. She narrated the sad story of her grief and affliction, and the Master in a state of Samadhi uttered these strange words—"You are fortunate. God helps those who have none to call their own," and then he sang a song of divine grace. We are told that all this had its desired effect in bringing new hope to the despondent lady, and she felt cheered and happy.

Since then Golap Ma used to visit Dakshineswar frequently and came under the direct influence of the Master and the Holy Mother. She was accepted as a disciple by Sri Ramakrishna and had also the rare privilege of entertaining him and his party in her house. After the passing away of the Master, she became a constant companion of the Holy Mother, sometimes accompanying her in her pilgrimages and at other times living with her in her Calcutta home. Seldom does it fall to the lot of one to have the privilege of the company and blessings of such exalted personalities, and Golap Ma had it in abundance. She profited by it and advanced in spirituality, as is evidenced by the ideal life she lived—a life that was characterised by non-attachment, love, service and the inwardness of devotion.

THE PASSING AWAY OF AN AMERICAN DEVOTEE.

With deep regret, we record the passing away of Mr. C. F. Peterson a few months ago. He and his wife were associated with the Vedanta Society of San Francisco,

California, almost from the beginning of the Vedanta movement on the Pacific coast. They united with and helped Swami Turiyananda and Swami Trigunatita in carrying on the work. They took Swami Trigunatita in their home and maintained him until the Society grew and the Temple was built.

Mr. Peterson served several times as President of the Society and was trustee for many years. He spoke little but tried to live the life of an ideal householder. He was a man of great sincerity and sterling character and was loved by all. At his death the Society is deprived not only of a good friend, but an active worker such as can hardly be replaced.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

It is not with the poorest classes that unemployment, takes its most serious form. It is the middle classes that suffer most from this difficulty. It is sometimes urged that they themselves are responsible for this, inasmuch as they are credited with a contempt for manual labour on the one hand, and an exaggerated respect and fondness for the clerical and learned professions, on the other. It is impossible to deny that there is some element of truth in this allegation, but it does not represent the whole truth. Especially in view of the fact that in recent times, with the increased cost of education, the congestion of the clerical and other learned professions and the like, it has become an extremely difficult task for a middle class man to earn his bare livelihood. While the cost of living has increased many times, the standard of living, which he has long been accustomed to, cannot be lowered all on a sudden. The social customs and obligations, involving an additional expense, too, add their own quota of difficulties. Under the circumstances, it is no wonder to find that people of the middle class suffer most. They cannot be accused of perversity, pure and simple, if they are found unwilling to take to manual labour.

Whether owing to the restricted field for employment or to the overcrowding of professions or other causes, it

is an undoubted fact that the middle class suffers from unemployment. To advise them to take to a technical or industrial walk of life, and hold them responsible if they find it unsuited to them, is to ignore relevant facts. It is often pointed out that a carpenter or a mason is able to earn Rs. 2/- to Rs. 3/- per day, while a graduate is content to drudge on Rs. 30/- to Rs. 40/- per month in a crowded city and patiently put up with a host of troubles and difficulties. In our opinion, the cause of this anomaly should be sought in the false and unnatural system of education in which he has been brought up.

It is high time that those who are responsible for shaping the policy of education of our country, realise that the training of the hand, the eye, and the body is as important as the sharpening of the intellect which is all that the present day schools do for their students. One effective remedy for the unemployment of the middle classes lies in making the education more practical, in instilling in the minds of boys, while young, the dignity of manual labour, and in providing ample opportunities for all young men to learn useful trades and technical industries.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S BIRTHDAY.

The *Tithi* of Sri Ramakrishna's ninetieth nativity falls on Tuesday, the 24th February, 1925 and the public celebration in most places comes off on Sunday, the 1st March. Reports of the celebration may kindly be sent to our office as early as possible.

MANAGER'S NOTICE.

Foreign Subscribers who have not paid their Subscriptions of the Prabuddha Bharata for the current year, together with arrears if any, are requested kindly to remit them at their earliest convenience @ Rs. 4/8 per year (\$1.50 or 8 Shillings approximately).

Prabuddha Bharata



સર્વિષ્ટત આયત

प्राप्य वरास्त्रिषोषत ।

Katha Upa. I, iii. 4.

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXX.

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No. 3.

TO A SAGE.

(To the memory of Swami Vivekananda.)

The angels of Vinci turn away, jealous,
So much infinite science irradiates around your brow.
Purity meditates within your eyes where fools see madness.
You have never partaken of the vile things of life,
For, you pass amidst the crowd, by them uncontaminated,
Dreaming of Sin only that you may subjugate it.
You the initiator, sweet like Evening,
O my fervor unique, O brother, O master,
You the prophet who proclaimed solely the Ideal,
Hail to you ! my thanks ! for, I drew from your
 sidereal heart
And from your songs, the august strength, indispensable,
In order to scorn the world, yet to love the earth.

JULES BOIS.

WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT KANKHAL.

Three years had passed since I left Swami Turiyananda at Kurukshetra where we had been together during the great Mela of 1907 to observe a total eclipse of the sun. And now, on the 7th of April, 1910, I met him again at Kankhal where Swami Premananda and I arrived by the early train from Benares.

Swami Turiyananda had come a few weeks earlier from Nagal where he had been taken ill with fever. His condition had been quite serious for a time, but now he was in a state of convalescence.

On our arrival at the Sevashrama, Swami Premananda being detained, I went alone to his room where he was expecting us. When I entered I found him seated in his bed. He had not changed much in appearance except that his hair and beard were turning grey and the top of his head was getting bald. He looked weak but not sick. He had a peaceful expression in his face and eyes. His voice was low but steady. And underneath his physical weakness I detected great inward strength. Every movement of his—even his voice, indicated this.

After a few words of mutual greeting, and my assurance that Swami Premananda would come presently, the Swami inquired after my health. "You look weak and much reduced," he said. "Why did you not consult a good physician in Calcutta? It is a question of food. Our food does not agree with you. We don't know how to take proper care of our health; therefore

we suffer so much. Be strong; don't be weak. But never mind the body. I was sinking for the last six months, but I did not care. I had no fear. I was ready to go. But Mother has not allowed it yet. I realise more and more that She does everything. We are only machines. We cannot do anything unless She allows it. May we never forget it."

"But why does She make us weak?" I asked.

"She knows," the Swami answered. "There may be good in weakness also. Nothing is absolutely bad. But we are not able to judge."

Swami Premananda now entered the room, and it was a pleasure to see the happy meeting of the brother monks. Smilingly I said, "Swami Premananda has come to take you to the Math."

"No, not yet," the Swami said. "The doctor wants me to go to the hills to gather strength. He will not allow me to go to the plains. It is too hot there. And I will have no rest. People will come to see me all day."

In the afternoon I told the Swami that I had received a book that dealt with symbolism.

"Why do you trouble yourself with symbolism?" he said. "Our Master's teaching is so simple and easy. It is the straight path. Once a learned Pandit came to him and for two hours spoke on Vedanta philosophy. Then the Master said, 'Sir, what you said may be very beautiful, but I don't understand all these things. I know only my Mother Divine and that I am Her son.' This opened the Pandit's eyes. 'Blessed are you, Sir!' he exclaimed. The Master's simplicity so touched him that he wept."

In the evening we talked about America and the students and friends there. "Mother was so kind to take me there," the Swami said. "You are all near and dear to me. Often I feel your presence. I close my eyes and call up one of the friends there. Of course, they do not know it. And it is only my imagination. But it satisfies me. Everything is in the mind. In Atman we are all one."

Speaking about the attitude of different people towards me, he said, "It is our own projection. Good and bad are in our own mind. It is good to try and see good everywhere. When Mother is near, all is well. In Her absence difficulties begin."

In answer to my question whether he would like to go to Kashmir, the Swami replied, "Planning is useless, for Mother knows already what will come to pass. We plan because we have not absolute faith. It requires great faith not to plan. What does it matter, Kashmir or Calcutta? Mother is everywhere."

When I saw him the following morning, the Swami said, "Some people think that I like to live alone. That is not so. I like congenial company."

"But you do not like noisy places," I said.

"I don't care how much noise there is," he replied, "provided all are of one mind, holding the same interest, and it must be for religion. I like people to come, but they must talk on religion. I like to teach what I know, for that gives me the feeling that I am of some use. And what greater happiness is there than to serve others? How happy I was in America! But now I do not feel like taking charge of any work. I would feel bound, as it

I had a duty to perform. I must feel free. Then let come what will."

The following morning a young man arrived from the Holy Mother's village. The Holy Mother had initiated him into the order of Sannyasins and had given him a letter to Swami Turiyananda to perform the necessary rites. He had halted at many places on his way to Kankhal and had found that the food outside Bengal did not agree with him. Hearing this, the Swami said, "I wonder sometimes how we could live as we did in our youth. Now I find it difficult, but through strength of mind I can still do it. But the food is so poor. In those early days we did not care. Food, health, body were of no consideration. We had an ideal, and for that we lived. We used to meditate much. We would get food only once a day—a few pieces of bread collected from many houses and a little butter-milk. Anything satisfied us. And I got stout and strong. Perhaps in old age we require better food. But that is also mental. We think the food worthless, and we don't get nourishment from it. Those are happy days when we don't think of our bodies."

A Brahmachari asked, "Maharaj, what is a good subject for meditation?" "Any subject that appeals," the Swami replied. "All leads to the same goal. That will adjust itself."

Speaking about the relationship between the Guru and the disciple, the Swami said, "The Guru should hold the disciple through love. He should not bind him, but give him full freedom. He who binds will be bound himself. He should rule from the heart, not from the

head. His aim should be to dispel delusion, to clear the vision."

Then came the question of obedience. "The disciple should obey through love, not from fear. That would be slavery. Those who want power exact obedience. They want to rule. That is littleness."

The following day the Swami spoke about Swamiji. "He had wonderful power; he influenced many. But few acknowledge it. Many give his teachings as their own. He was fearless." And he quoted, 'The wise knowing the Brahman become fearless.'

"Do they become fearless of rebirth too?" I asked.

"For them there is no rebirth. Or if there is, you cannot call it birth, for even then they are free. Siva, Siva, *Om tat sat!* They are fearless because they are not attached. When Mother is known attachment goes. The world then becomes so small, so insignificant—a little mud-puddle." A far-away look came in his eyes as he sat silent. And his face seemed to shine with a peculiar light. No one spoke for a long time.

The following day he spoke about his American experiences and his travels with Swamiji. "It is all Mother's grace," he said. "Siva, Siva! Without Her all is misery. Her grace comes when we implore Her, when our heart always goes out to Her."

Of one of his American students he said that she was too dependent. "Why does she not cling to Sri Ramakrishna? I am his servant. Let all come to him, then no fear."

Speaking about Western poets and philosophers, I remarked that they owe much to Eastern thought. The Swami smiled and said, "Siva is the greatest philosopher.

When Narada told him about Uma's death he said, 'Very well, now I can meditate without disturbance.' That is practical philosophy."

(To be continued.)

SWAMI ATULANANDA.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The Krishna Saptami of the Bengali month of Magh is a day of special significance to us, for on this day sixty-two years ago was born the great Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of India, and his birthday anniversary is celebrated in many places with pomp and solemnity. It is a fact of history that a great man, wherever he is born, will certainly be recognised and honoured if not in his life-time, at least after the dissolution of his physical body at the end of his earthly career. But let us not commit the mistake that is generally made and idolise Swamiji to the neglect of his teachings, for that will retard the progress of the cause for which he came. This false admiration that makes an idol of a great man without any consideration for the principles he embodies, has been the fruitful cause of the ruin of many a religious movement. Again, our admiration for Swamiji should not be mechanical or superficial, for it is useless and does not affect life. In Europe, for instance, the saints have their days of celebration every year in the calendar. But Europe is what it is though such celebrations come and go every year.

The best way to show our respect to the memory of Swamiji as also of all great men is to imitate in everyday life their greatness. As he used to call himself, he was a voice without a form—the time-spirit, proclaiming the glory of some eternal truth. Hence our homage should be more impersonal than personal. Swamiji would rather be glad, if we forget his name and try to carry out his principles. His birthday should be a day set apart more for heart-searching and self-consecration than for mere worship of his image or relics. On that day we should see how far we are faithful to the ideal that he set forth—how far we are trying to translate into action the teachings that he left us. On that day we should draw inspiration from his life and see how best we can utilise our own powers and help the cause that was so dear to him.

* * *

Swamiji was a type of spiritual health and vigour that is badly needed at this hour for our national regeneration. We have fallen upon evil days. Along with the general decadence, political, economical and social, there have come over us a loss of Sraddha and a religious morbidity. In the first place, the onslaughts of the Western materialism have given a rude shock to our faith in our past traditions and culture, driving many crazy for a slavish imitation of the West. Secondly, the general religious morbidity has given rise in others to queer ideas about spiritual excellence. For example, it is believed in many circles that a religious man must of necessity be in a fluid state of body and mind with oddities in manners and dealings. He must be ponderously grave, never indulging in pleasantry or humour. He must be

rigid and austere to a degree, giving himself up to extreme privations or other kinds of self-mortification. He must observe a self-sufficient isolation, shunning with contempt the world and its miseries. Above all, he must have supernatural powers and propound secret rites or ceremonials. Swamiji's life was a vehement protest not only against the denationalisation of our people by a blind imitation of the West, but also against all queer religious notions. He pulverised with the sledge-hammer blows of a true nation-builder all cramping theories and preached a doctrine of strength based on the innate Divinity of the human personality. Affectation, namby-pamby, mystery-mongering, esotericism and the like had no place in his teachings.

* * *

Swamiji had from his boyhood a strong physique, a high percentage of common sense and a keen, all-sided intelligence, combined with all the supreme virtues that make for moral or spiritual excellence, and he wanted his countrymen to be like him. Sincere to the core of his being, caring for nothing but truth at all costs, uncompromising in his dealings with the world and its vagaries, spotlessly pure in thought, word and deed, totally selfless, having a heart that was profound like the ocean in its depth and sweep, and above all vibrant and resonant with strength and self-confidence—he was indeed a wonderful man. To see him was an inspiration. To talk with him and move in his company was to be quickened with new life. Those who had the privilege of sitting at his feet bear testimony to all this; and we, as we read his recorded utterances and writings or see his portraits, get a glimpse of the man he was. His life

and character really represents an ideal to conjure with. And if our countrymen give it the serious study which it undoubtedly deserves, they will feel an exaltation of spirit and an accession of strength, in their individual and collective life.



There is no doubt that Swamiji was a complex personality as all great men are. He combined in one so many apparently contradictory elements that he is still a veritable puzzle to many. Hence people, failing to understand the man and his teachings, often make a sad caricature of them. It is but natural, for finites pieced together can not make an infinite. The available records of the Swamiji's life, however extensive and authentic, will give a partial and imperfect view, unless we bring in the right values of judgment and systematise them in our synthetic mind. Our ordinary standards of judgment are often not sure guides, and they are apt to mislead us when applied to the study of a genius like Swamiji. What we should do is to approach the study of his life with great caution and humility and think about the different aspects of his character with a due reference to the ideal he represents and the environmental conditions of the times in which he was born. We shall then get new flashes of light by which we shall be able to solve all the apparent contradictions we meet with at the outset.

Only a great man can make a true estimate of the greatness of another great man. Only an expert jeweller has the power to set the right value upon a rare diamond

or ruby. It also holds good with regard to Swamiji. We are reminded in this connection of that memorable incident in the life of Swamiji. When he first came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of Dakshineswar, he was then in his teens, and burning with an intense desire for spiritual illumination he was going about from place to place in search of a man who could say that he had seen God, and help him in his struggles. At last he saw Sri Ramakrishna. It was Sri Ramakrishna who, with his transcendental insight and power, stilled the commotion of the boy's soul and recognising the rare spiritual possibilities he had, utilised him for the carrying out of his own divine mission. Perhaps the readers are aware of the high encomium in terms of which the Master used to speak about his worthy disciple and how his words came literally true.



Great as Swamiji was in his individual character, he had an equally great mission in the world, and we can best describe it by quoting from one of his poems :

"Be bold, and face

The Truth ! Be one with it ! Let vision cease ;

Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,

Which are *eternal love* and *service free*."

Though he possessed the power to lose himself in Samadhi, the consummation of human endeavours, he was not permitted to do so by the inscrutable will of Providence. For, he was not born like an ordinary man to work out his own salvation alone ; he was to carry humanity along with him. We know how under the blessed tutelage of the God-man of Dakshineswar he began his Sadhana in right earnest, scaling the dizzy

heights of realisation, till there remained only a thin film of Maya between him and the highest goal, and the Master had to pray to the Divine Mother, so that this veil might not be removed, for he had to do a lot of work through him. Again we are told how Swamiji, consumed with a supreme longing for the bliss of Samadhi, pressed the Master to help him to have it, and how he hung down his head with shame when the Master remonstrated him saying: "At least *you* should not stoop so low as to care for your own emancipation." Since then the bliss of the highest knowledge became a trifle to him, and he dedicated his life at the altar of selfless love and service. His heart became so wide in its sympathy that it throbbed, as it were, with all the hearts that ached, known and unknown. He would not even believe in any other God than the sum-total of all souls, and he was ready to be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries, so that he might serve this God existing as the poor, the miserable, the wicked of all races. This love, this sympathy has been bequeathed to us, his countrymen, as a legacy by him.

Swamiji was the symbol of future India—India that is to be, rejuvenated, glorious and prosperous. He had in his own life all the strivings of the future nation, and if we turn thereto we shall find the solution of all our problems. He saw with the vision of a prophet that the secret of our national existence is religion, and if we are faithful to our spiritual ideals we shall have everything we want. Hence what he tried to do was to lead our individual and collective aspirations to a supreme ideal of

freedom by a rehabilitation of our religion. Besides, he pointed out that India with her unique cultural traditions and spiritual ideals is the only country that can lead humanity and bring peace and harmony in the world. "Slowly and silently, as the gentle dew that falls in the morning, unseen, unheard, yet producing a most tremendous result, has been the work of this calm, patient, all-suffering, spiritual race upon the world of thought. Once more history is about to repeat itself," said he. Yes, we Hindus must pour out our own quota to the sum-total of human progress, and it is the gift of spirituality which we can give and which the world, specially the people of the West, need so much to-day. But we must learn from the West, as Swamiji says, its conquest of external nature, its sciences, its organisation, its sanitation, its practicality. On this principle of mutual give and take, Swamiji is confident, the East should be united with the West, though some pessimists hold the contrary view that 'never the twain shall meet.' Let us follow the lead of Swamiji and be optimistic about the future of our country and of the world at large.



In conclusion, we say that Swamiji as a man was one in whom the ideals of knowledge, love and selfless work were perfected to a degree. He had the discriminative wisdom and dispassion of a Jnani like Sankara, the all-embracing love of a prophet of compassion like Buddha and the spirit of absolute non-attachment of a Rajarshi like Janaka. In his public life we find in him a great teacher of religion who preached the universal, synthetic principles of Vedanta and the harmony of all

religions,—an ardent patriot who loved our motherland from the bottom of his heart and laid down his life for rousing the national consciousness, and a true reformer who gave positive ideas for a thorough reconstruction of our society and polity. As we are too near him, our estimate of his life and work cannot but be partial. The world has yet to know of him, and we believe the time will come when he will have his due appreciation. Blessed is India that gave birth to a man like him, and blessed are we, his countrymen, for we can call him as one of our own.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MAHATMA GANDHI.

It is a time-honoured tradition with the Prabuddha Bharata that its March issue should be the Vivekananda number, presenting to its readers a picture of the great Swami's personality in some of its prominent aspects; and the punctilious editor has laid upon the humble writer the most delicate and onerous task of making a comparative study of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi, two of the greatest figures that have contributed to make modern India what it is. Before entering into the actual subject-matter, a few preliminary observations which may help to clear the ground, will not be altogether out of place.

In studying the lives of great world-moving personalities and in estimating their contribution to humanity, one of our first tasks should be to examine closely and form an accurate idea of their historical setting and background. Although such great men are in a certain sense the products of their times, their greatness consists in the fact that their genius serves as a leaven to originate a new outlook on life among the people of their times at the most critical epochs in the history of their country.

Consequently, their achievements and their success or failure should not be measured merely by the immediately practicalised actual results, but by the persistency of the force and momentum of the revolutions in the thought-world of which they are the creators. As a matter of fact, history furnishes several illustrations of great prophets whose life-work seems to be barren, judged by the immediate external consequences, but the forces which they have set in motion seem to grow in intensity with the progress of time, and bear wonderful fruits.

A careful student of the life of Swami Vivekananda will have no difficulty in realising at what a momentous crisis in the history of our country his mission began. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the British rule in India became an established fact; and, as a consequence, the people were brought face to face with all the external splendour, scientific achievements and progress of the material civilisation of the West at a time when the national life of the country was at a very low ebb. This proved too rich a feast for the hungry stomach, and the inevitable result followed. The culture and civilisation of India have been progressing on fundamentally different lines as compared with the West, and it is no wonder that when the former, for all outward appearances, lay vanquished at the feet of the latter, the people began to lose all faith in themselves, and the only alternative that presented itself before their stupefied vision was to forswear their past and to sit at the feet of the West for everything in order to regenerate their country. In a word, in all departments of life the West became the Guru, and its approval the only standard of merit or greatness, to such an extent that the most enlightened of the land began to flout their own religion and glory themselves in a slavish imitation of the customs and ways of the West.

This, by itself, might not be considered a calamity but for the fact that India had not only not become effete and a spent up force, but its heart and vital forces

were as sound as ever ; while, the Western civilisation, with all its external splendour, stood only on a foundation of sand. In the interest of sound progress and future of humanity, it became imperative that the civilisation of India with its gospel of universal toleration, harmony and love should be revitalised and made accessible to all the nations of the world, which as yet had not discovered any basis for permanent peace except that of annihilation or emasculation of their rivals. It was at this psychological moment that the soul of the ancient Vedic wisdom, and the consciousness of the East took the form of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa in order to lay the foundation of universal brotherhood and peace in the world.

All this somewhat lengthy prelude has been deemed necessary as it enables us to understand the real significance of the mission of Swami Vivekananda, for giving expression to the spirit and soul of India, as he found it embodied in the life of his Master. The greatness of his genius is nowhere more strikingly illustrated than in the wonderful skill with which he clothed this ancient wisdom in the scientific and rational garb, and showed its application to the various intricate problems of the modern age. It is obviously far beyond the scope of a short article of this kind to enter fully into this most fascinating study ; and we must, of necessity, confine our attention to that aspect of Swamiji's activities which has a direct bearing upon the awakening and shaping of modern India. This would also afford us facilities for comparing his diagnosis and remedy with those of Mahatma Gandhi.

Entering on this particular aspect of his mission, even a most cursory student cannot fail to notice the following characteristic features. The first and foremost of these is his extraordinarily clear and definite vision regarding the glorious mission which his own motherland is destined to fulfil. This seems to be the very burden of his song; for in almost all of the scores of lectures which he delivered in his triumphal march from Colmbo

to Almora on his return from his glorious achievement at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, we find him harping on this one point in particular. To quote at random only a single passage from his reply to the address at Pamban—"The eyes of the whole world are now turned towards this land of India for spiritual food, and India has to provide it for all the races. Here alone is the best ideal for mankind, and Western scholars are now striving to understand this ideal which is enshrined in our Sanskrit literature and philosophy, and which has been the characteristic of India all through the ages. * * * There never was a time in the world's history when there was so much robbery and high-handedness, and tyranny of the strong over the weak, as at this latter end of the nineteenth century. Everybody should know that there is no salvation except through the conquering of desires, and that no man is free who is subject to the bondage of matter. * * * We Hindus have now been placed, under God's providence, in a very critical and responsible position. The nations of the West are coming to us for spiritual help. A great moral obligation rests on the sons of India to fully equip themselves for the work of enlightening the world on the problems of human existence * * * We may be degraded and degenerated now, but, however degraded and degenerated we may be, we can become great if we only begin to work in right earnest on behalf of our religion."

The next characteristic of Swamiji is the unerring precision with which he traces the causes of our degeneration and the most appropriate and effective remedy which he prescribes. Says he, "It is we who are responsible for all our misery and all our degradation, and we alone are responsible. Our aristocratic ancestors went on treading the common masses of our country under foot, till they became helpless, till under this torment the poor, poor people nearly forgot that they were human beings. * * * Our poor people, these down-trodden masses of India, therefore, require to hear and to know what they really are. Aye, let

every man and woman and child, without respect of caste or birth, weakness or strength, hear and learn that behind the strong and the weak, behind the high and the low, behind every one, there is that Infinite Soul, assuring the infinite possibility and the infinite capacity of all to become great and good. * * * Arise, awake ! Awake from this hypnotism of weakness. None is really weak. The soul is infinite, omnipotent and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourselves, proclaim the God within you, do not deny Him ! Too much of inactivity, too much of weakness, too much of hypnotism has been and is upon our race. O ye modern Hindus, de-hypnotise yourselves. The way to do that is found in your own sacred books. Teach yourselves, teach every one his real nature, call upon the sleeping soul to see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity."

The details of his message and the methods of realising them in practice are to be found in the 2,000 pages or more of his published writings and speeches, his unique gift to his countrymen, and we would entreat the interested readers to refer to them. If we are asked to characterise his message in one word, we would say it is a gospel of *strength*. His constant cry is manliness, man-making, 'अमी: अमी:', fearlessness, which, with wonderful insight he sums up as the spirit and message of the Upanishads. If he condemned anything more violently than all the rest, it was physical weakness, which he holds is the cause of the fact that parrot-like thinking has become a habit with us and never doing.' * So he exclaims—"First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends ; that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to Heaven through foot-ball than through the study of the Gita. * * * You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads

better and the glory of the Atman, when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men." In conclusion, it must be pointed out that reading the utterances of Swamiji, we cannot help being struck with the fact that he speaks as one who has a clear vision before him, and his voice rings with the authority of Spiritual Illumination, and he always hits the right nail in the right place. In a word, he is the reformer, patriot and prophet by Divine right.

Now turning to the study of the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi, we find that it can be treated most appropriately under two aspects, viz. his personal life and public career, or Gandhi the man and Gandhi the national leader. Regarding the first, our task is very simple, for it is acknowledged by the entire enlightened and unprejudiced world that he is one of the greatest and boldest preachers of morality and an ideal Karma-Yogi the world has ever seen. Of his renunciation, fearlessness, devotion to truth, purity, sincerity, humility, utter selflessness, love for all mankind and above all his Himalayan faith in Ahimsa or non-violence, it would be superfluous for us to dwell upon. For, who would think of holding out a candle to demonstrate the sun?

With regard to his leadership, it is by no means an easy matter. For, in the first place, we are too near to his field of work; secondly, most fortunately, Mahatma Gandhi is still with us in the very thick of his struggle, growing and evolving, and the possibilities of his wonderful personality are yet to be unfolded, and consequently, any opinion and conclusions that we may form are likely to turn out inaccurate, and, in all that we shall write, we offer them with much hesitation and to a large extent in a tentative manner.

In our humble opinion, the key to Mahatmaji's philosophy of life and work is non-violence, and this mainly we shall consider. Does Mahatmaji regard untouchability as a blot on Hinduism and try to devote his energy and that of the nation to its abolition, or does he regard Hindu-Muslim and other communal unity as vital to the

healthy life of our nation, or does he hold the exclusion of foreign cloth a supreme end in itself, or does his most gentle and loving heart go to characterise the British Government as satanic, it is because he sees violence in some form or other in all these, and his whole soul revolts at it. Even his extreme devotion to truth can be ultimately resolved into his supreme ideal of Ahimsa. It is true that he has not asked the nation to accept this ideal of non-violence in the same sense as he holds it, but only as a policy for the time being, but it is obvious that he hopes the time will come when the whole of India, nay, the whole world, will accept it as an article of living faith.

Could it be that in the inscrutable ways of Providence it is ordained that through this gospel of non-violence, Mahatmaji will be His instrument to ring the death-knell of militarism, capitalism, imperialism and all other forms of violence that are menacing the peace of the world in the present as well as in the future? Might it be that where Gautama Buddha and Jesus Christ in a sense failed, their modern replica in the person of Mahatmaji is destined to succeed in establishing the Kingdom of Heaven on earth by making Ahimsa the supreme rule of conduct all over the world? Only future events and posterity will be in a position to judge and pronounce a definite opinion ; and, for our own part, we would resist all temptation to dogmatise either way.

Apparently influenced by the seeming contrast of the gospel of manliness to that of non-violence, certain critics have been led to make some such observations. It is said that Swamiji, though a formally initiated Sannyasin, was more of a Kshatriya in spirit like Parashuram of old, while Mahatmaji, though a Vaisya and a householder, is really more of a Brahmin in spirit like Buddha. Such statements appear to be based not only on a partial view of the two personalities, but also betrays a misunderstanding of their real nature. For, to deny Brahminhood or the spirit of Satva to a Yogi of Yogis like Swamiji, who could at any time and without the least effort pass into states of ecstasy,

and who had in the very hollow of his hand the highest state of spiritual illumination or Nirvikalpa Samadhi, is as absurd as denying strength and heroism or Kshatriyahood to Mahatmaji, who is a born passive resister and a prince among Satyagrahis. It is true that Swamiji insists most frequently upon the need for manliness, but this would by no means imply that he was in any way a less ardent believer in non-violence. His view on this point is as follows—"All great teachers have taught, 'Resist not evil,' that non-resistance is the highest moral ideal. We all know that, if a certain number of us attempted to put that maxim fully into practice, the whole social fabric would fall to pieces, the wicked would take possession of our properties and our lives, and would do whatever they liked with us. Even if only one day of such non-resistance were practised, it would lead to disaster. Yet, intuitively, in our heart of hearts we feel the truth of the teaching, 'Resist not evil.' This seems to us to be the highest ideal; yet to teach this doctrine only would be equivalent to condemning a vast portion of mankind. Not only so, it would be making men feel that they were always doing wrong, causing them scruples of conscience in all their actions; it would weaken them, and that constant self-disapproval would breed more vice than any other weakness would. To the man who has begun to hate himself, the gate to degeneration has already opened; and the same is true of a nation. * * * The only alternative remaining to us is to recognise that duty and morality vary under different circumstances; not that the man who resists evil is doing what is always and in itself wrong, but that in the different circumstances in which he is placed it may become even his duty to resist evil. * * * One man does not resist because he is weak, lazy, and will not because he cannot; the other man knows that he can strike an irresistible blow if he likes; yet he not only does not strike, but blesses his enemies. The one who from weakness resists not, commits a sin, and as such cannot receive any benefit from the non-resistance; while the other would commit a sin by offering resistance. * * * The Karma-Yogin is the man

who understands that the highest ideal is non-resistance, and who also knows that this non-resistance is the highest manifestation of power in actual possession, also what is called the resisting of evil is but a step on the way towards the manifestation of this highest power, namely, non-resistance. *Before reaching this highest ideal, man's duty is to resist evil. Let him work, let him fight, let him strike straight from the shoulder. Then only, when he has gained the power to resist, will non-resistance be a virtue.*" As if to make his position still more clear he says—"I preach only the Upanishads, * * * and of the Upanishads, it is only that one idea *strength*. The quintessence of Vedas and Vedanta and all lies in that one word. Buddha's teaching was of non-resistance or non-injury. But I think this is a better way of teaching the same thing. For behind that non-injury lay a dreadful weakness. It is weakness that conceives the idea of resistance. I do not think of punishing or escaping from a drop of sea-spray. It is nothing to me. Yet to the mosquito it would be serious. Now I would make all injury like that. Strength and fearlessness. My own ideal is that giant of a saint whom they killed in the Mutiny, and who broke his silence, when stabbed to the heart, to say—'And thou also art He.' "

Another critic complains that Swamiji has said nothing about the Hindu-Muslim unity. We confess we do not understand what he exactly means. The present phase of the problem has got three elements, the religious, the political and the social. As regards the most important, namely, the religious element, we wonder what more the critic expects of Swamiji whose whole life was devoted to the preaching of universal toleration and harmony of all religions.

Another mistake which some writers make is that they take it for granted that a comparative study of great men cannot be made without laying down how and in what respects one is superior to the other. We think this is not only not necessary but unwarranted as well. Suppose we are asked to say, 'Which is superior—the lotus or the

rose?' We would reply by challenging the propriety of the form of the question, and say, 'Each is great in its own nature and place'. We believe, Mahatmaji, with the exception of his emphasis on non-violence rather than strength and other minor differences of detail, is but carrying on the work originated by Swamiji. Who can fail to be struck with the close family resemblance of Swamiji's watch-word of toleration and religious harmony, service to and the elevation of the poor and the down-trodden, his man-making education etc., on the one hand, and on the other, the items of the famous constructive programme of Mahatmaji?

Great souls like these are the instruments chosen by the Lord to fulfil His purpose on earth, and are but different manifestations of the same Divine energy, as Sri Krishna declares in the Gita :

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।

तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशसंभवम् ॥

—"Whatever being there is great, prosperous or powerful, that know thou to be a product of a part of My splendour."

"SUDAMA."

A CHAPTER IN THE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT OF INDIA.

BY MANI BHUSHAN MAJUMDAR, M.A., B.L.

(Continued from p. 75.)

Immediately after the death of Raja Rammohan Roy, the Brahma Samaj founded by him degenerated a great deal. It lost much of its catholic spirit, and all sorts of meaningless restrictions were introduced by those who guided its affairs. In the first place, in the prayer-hall of the Samaj, a place was reserved where the Vedas were to be recited with injunctions that none but the people

of the first three castes should be present there. Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore who became the leader of the Samaj soon after, perceived that it was quite an anomaly and was in antagonism to the spirit of its trust-deed. So he ordained that the Vedas should be read out publicly, and there should be no such restriction or privilege. Besides, he made the rule that no doctrine of incarnation or idolatry should be preached in the prayer-hall. At the time of the Raja, the recitation of the Gayatri Mantram was a special feature of the common prayer. But the Maharshi saw that the Gayatri, however sublime in its meaning, was not intelligible to all; so he introduced some simpler texts from the Upanishads in its place.

The Upanishads, the expressions of the highest religious ideas, were the source of the Maharshi's religious inspiration, and he found in them the true spirit of a universal religion. According to him there can be one religion throughout India only if the catholic teachings embodied in the Upanishads are preached to all. The sages declared: "I know that perfect, infinite Spirit, who is like the sun after darkness, knowing whom a person overcomes death; there is no other road for obtaining liberation." This is, according to the Maharshi, the supreme wisdom, the object of which is to realise Brahman, who is one without a second, who is infinite truth, knowledge, goodness and bliss, who is manifest in the glories of the universe and is at the same time beyond them. He studied the Vedas closely and found that the sages worshipped only one God whom they called by different names, such as, Agni, Yama, Vayu and the like, as is supported by the following text of the Yajurveda—*ॐ ईश सर्वदेवा*, "He is all the gods." For the benefit of the people who do not know Sanskrit, he translated the Rigveda into Bengali.

Devendra Nath was a theist, believing in Brahman, who is formless but has infinite attributes, and he interpreted the Upanishads in that light. But subsequently when he discovered that there are texts in the Upanishads, such as, 'I am He' or 'That thou art' which uphold the

absolute unity and identity of the individual soul with Brahman, his theistic mind received a rude shock, and he was disappointed. The Brahma religion formulated by him set forth God as an object of adoration, and His true place is a pious heart. Hence according to him, the Vedas and the Upanishads have value in so far as they are consistent with these ideas, and satisfy the cravings of a pious heart and the dictates of a true conscience. Say the Upanishads—*इदा मनोषा मनसाभिक्रमः*. "God is manifest to one, who thinks about Him with an open heart and a strong conviction." Thus religion, according to the Maharshi, aims at elevating the soul to a state of eternal bliss and not at total annihilation (*निर्वाण मृत्ति*). He could not reconcile himself with the interpretation of the Upanishads that abolishes the individuality of the human soul.

To promulgate his faith he published a book, the basis of which was the truth he actually realised in life, and it formed the theoretical ground-work of the Brahma religion preached by him. For the practical guidance of his followers, he wrote another work drawing his illustrations from the teachings of the Gita, the Mahabharata and the Manu-Samhita. So in the prayer-hall of the Samaj, in place of the Vedas and the Upanishads were read chapters from his books, and in place of an abstract conception of a featureless Brahman came into being the practical adoration of God by the love of a devout heart. As we have already observed, the Maharshi had no faith in the pure monistic aspect of the Vedanta. In fact, he used to say that the Brahma religion should guard against it as well as against idolatry. For, according to him, while idolatry attributes to God the conceptions of humanity, such a Vedantism makes Him a void. The cardinal principles of his religious faith may be summed up thus—"In the beginning there was only Brahman and nothing else. He created the universe. He is knowledge itself. He is eternal, omniscient, all-pervading, all-powerful, self-consistent, complete and incomparable. He is the guide and shelter of every

creature. He is bliss itself, and both temporal and eternal happiness can be attained through adoration of Him. He is One without a second. He has infinite attributes but is formless. To please Him is to try to do His will."

Before the Maharshi, the Brahma religion aimed at preaching some universal religious truths and fighting the superstitious ideas that had taken firm root in the minds of the people. What he did was to introduce a method in the congregational prayer offered in the prayer-hall of the Samaj by supplying a deep spiritual fervour. He devoted his whole life to the cultivation of his naturally strong and vivid religious instincts and helped others to do so. He was looked upon as a person whose whole career was a bright example of prayerfulness and meditation, deep, fervent and sincere, comparable only to that of the Rishis of old. But he was rather conservative in religious matters and was against introducing foreign elements into his creed. Some of the fundamental principles of the Upanishads and the dictates of his own conscience were his guide, and he infused life and vigour into the Brahma Samaj by the ideal life that he lived.

After the Maharshi, Brahmananda Keshab Chandra Sen became the leader of the Samaj. He adopted the catholic spirit of Raja Rammohan Roy in his religious views and arrived at a common understanding between the different religions of the world. He gave every denomination an independent place and believed that it had its utility and use for the guidance of man. He therefore enunciated and brought into practice a spirit of religious toleration and freedom. There is antagonism between different religions, because their respective adherents fail to notice the supreme affinity that exists in every religion. It was in the name of religious freedom that Brahmananda Keshab severed his connection with the party of Maharshi Devendra Nath and founded the Indian Brahma Samaj. But, soon after, dissensions broke out in the camp of Keshab, for he alienated the feelings of many of his adherents by his preaching of the doctrine

of the Messiah and of himself as a messenger from God. He exercised his prerogative in matters of female education, widow marriage, inter-caste marriage and the like. In fact, he became an autocrat in his camp; so his followers began to think of separating from him. There was an open revolt after the marriage of his daughter with the prince of Cooch-Behar which, according to some of the Brahmas, was in violation of the rules framed for the guidance of the Samaj, and there was a regular split.

Keshab with some of his staunch followers founded the New Dispensation Church and introduced some new elements into his creed, as for instance, the idea of the Motherhood of God. He was indebted for this to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa of Dakshineswar from whom he imbibed this idea. This conception of God as Mother had a magnetic influence and served to unify to some extent the dissentient elements of the Samaj, for it appealed to the nobler sentiments of man by touching the tenderest parts of his heart. Of course, there were some who were against this innovation, but the majority welcomed it. With all his failings, Keshab was a great force in the country. He was looked upon as a genuine devotee, intoxicated with the thought of God, and his masterful voice, catholic views, deep religious fervour and charming personality extorted the unstinted admiration of one and all.

Along with the growth of freedom in religious ideas, there was also a hankering for freedom in social and political matters. And it was in Pandit Sivanath Sastri that it had its strongest adherent and upholder. No doubt the religious views of Keshab contained in germs the idea of freedom in its widest sense, but it was in Sivanath that it had its fullest expression. Sivanath believed that freedom is necessary not only in religious matters, but also in social and political aspirations. Keshab prayed for the good of humanity, Sivanath prayed in addition for the freedom of his country and society, and it was under his lead that the Sadharan Brahma Samaj (the party seceding from Keshab called itself by that name) was

organised and went on with its work of reform, with freedom as its motto. Unfortunately as that idea of all-sided freedom is now losing its hold upon the followers of the Samaj, it has ceased to exercise its influence upon the people. But it must be admitted that the country is greatly indebted to the movement for the service it rendered in the past.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM AMERICA?*

BY SWAMI BODHANANDA.

I want to tell you something about America, as I have spent nearly a third of my life there. America is a country of ample opportunities. You, educated men here, are all acquainted with the name of that great, perhaps the greatest American citizen, I mean Abraham Lincoln. The history of America, by which I mean an account of her social, industrial and political life, will be incomplete, if one does not mention this outstanding figure. If George Washington was the founder of the American nation, it was Abraham Lincoln who was its saviour. Lincoln was born of poor parents. In his youth he was a rail-splitter and a wood-chopper, and he made his way from the log-cabin in which he was born, to the White-house. The people of the United States gave him the highest position that they can give to any citizen. Lincoln once said that a nation cannot exist half-free and half-slave. And I believe that if he were living to-day, he would have had that same moral courage to say to the whole world, "The world cannot be half-free and half-slave," and he would have said it most effectually. Since Lincoln's time there have been many societies and associations in the life of every civilisation to study the great question of freedom and bondage. It was declared and demonstrated by Lincoln that 'the government of the people for the people by the people' cannot be a failure.

* Notes of a lecture delivered in Calcutta.

I told you America is a country of many opportunities. It was Lincoln who made it rich and prosperous as it is to-day. He introduced the system of tariff, and he illustrated his policy in some such words: "If my wife wants a suit of clothes and buys it from England, she will have to pay the money. The money will go to England, and she will get the clothes only. But if she buys that in America, the money will remain in the country, and she will get the clothes." Dear friends, pardon me if I say one or two words in connection with this economic problem of America. The reason for her great prosperity can be found in her policy of protection. Because America is a free country, she can raise protective walls for her industries. There is no free trade there. Of course, there are some advocates of it, but the majority of the people, specially Abraham Lincoln's followers, are opposed to it.

America is a wealthy country, and I need not tell you that America possesses half the wealth of the world. There, the salary of the President, the highest executive of the nation, until twelve years ago, was \$50,000 a year; that will be about Rs. 150,000. But take the case of the chief executive of your country. I do not exactly know how much salary he gets. But I think he gets much more than that. Thus and in many other ways an enormous amount of wealth is drained away from this impoverished country. This is the reason of our poverty. When I first landed in Bombay, I could not refrain from shedding tears at seeing some of our peasants and labourers. They were almost naked, they were like living dead bodies, perhaps they had not eaten any food for several days. What is this wretched condition due to? I leave that to you to settle. In India the average monthly income per head is Rs. 2-8, and in America it is more than Rs. 100. What a contrast! There are two kinds of labour—the skilled and the unskilled. The skilled labourer, such as the carpenter or the brick-layer, gets \$ 15 a day in America. It means that he earns Rs. 46 a day. And how much does your carpenter get? Perhaps, not more

than As 14 a day. Then the unskilled labourer, a sweeper for instance, gets \$ 5, i.e. Rs. 15 a day in America. This great wealth of America is not, of course, equally distributed. They say that five per cent. of the people possess ninety-five per cent. of the wealth. Still there is no poverty there—nothing like this appalling poverty that you have here in India. In America if a man is willing to work, if he is not lazy, he can earn easily Rs. 15 or something like it a day. So, America being a free country possesses these great advantages. It is all due to her freedom. I believe as a principle that unless a nation is completely free and independent to shape its own destinies, it cannot prosper.

The so-called politics is a rotten thing to me. The peoples in Europe and America also are losing faith in their diplomats and politicians, and the latter are being discredited everywhere. I am interested in economics. I want to see my people well-fed, well-dressed, self-reliant and prosperous. Swami Vivekananda used to observe that there cannot be any Yoga (religion) unless there has been some Bhoga (enjoyment). It is quite true. My heart aches at the distress of our masses—to see the teeming millions who are famished and illiterate. Now it is our duty to raise them from this slough of misery, poverty and disease. Even if we do not get any assistance from the Government to ameliorate their condition, let us ignore that, and let us do what lies in our power to relieve our famished, diseased brothers and sisters in our own way.

Gentlemen, I think I am trying your patience, and I do not want to take any more of your time. I will only say one or two words more. Three things have impressed me deeply in America. The first is the American educational system. In America every child, whether a boy or a girl, must go to school, until he or she is fifteen years old. This is the law of the State. The children of poor families are supplied with books, pencils, paper and all other things necessary for education by the State. And the education imparted is completely free, no tuition-fees

being received from any one. By true education I mean, and I know you all mean, the spiritual education. The education of America which I am speaking of, is secular education. Still, this secular education, this literacy, is also necessary for the progress of a nation, and we also badly need it.

The second thing that has interested me in America, is its sanitary arrangement. If there is an outbreak of any epidemic disease, hundreds of people will volunteer their services, and the State will provide money to start institutions to investigate the nature and the cause of the disease and to stamp it out. If the State has not money enough, it has a right to conscript the wealthy. In times of national emergency, the State collects the wealth of the millionaires and uses it for public good. For instance, in the case of a flood, fire or epidemic, if there is a need of money and if it is not forthcoming, then the Government has the right to conscript the wealth that Rockefeller and others possess. So, that is the great advantage of the people's government. Although the national wealth is unequally divided in America, still it remains in the country and is available in times of national need. The wealth is the people's wealth, and the government, as I told you, is the government of the people for the people by the people. The administration is always for the good of the people, and the higher executive officers take pride in saying, "We are the servants of the people." I heard three of the great Presidents in public lectures say that. In America the President has no right to impose his will upon the people. On the contrary, they dictate to him their policy. He must respect and carry out their wishes. But I do not know the actual condition here. You know that better than I do, because I had been away from India for the last seventeen years, perhaps more. Then, apropos of sanitation, all the children of America are examined by State physicians once in a while. The American people have discovered a great psychological truth. They believe that if the children are physically defective or have some physical ail-

ments, they develop such habits as truancy, delinquency, telling lies, stealing etc. The scientists have established it, and that explains the people's great attention to the health of their children. Then the third thing that has impressed me in America is the general prosperity of the country. I have already told you about it and do not like to say anything more on the point.

We badly need these three things here in India for our national welfare. The first is education ; the second, health ; and the third, wealth. Every member of a nation has a right to them.

THE WAY OF UNIVERSAL PEACE.

BY SWAMI GOVINDANANDA.

Do not make converts to your "*ism*". Rather accept all religious teachers and prophets and call on backward, barbaric peoples to mould and shape their lives in colours of their teachings, to reform their ways of thought, emotion and conduct in terms of those noble truths. Do not preach any articles of faith or system of formal worship. Do not ask people to subscribe to this creed or that, to believe in this prophet or that, to worship this God or that. But live a holy, noble, heroic and godly life ; and by your precept and example, seek to lead people to the way of suppressing, conquering and crucifying the brute and of awakening the Divine within them ; and thus lead them into the way and practice of holiness, righteousness and godliness. That was the way of the ancient Rishis, and that has been and will be the way of every true teacher and God-messenger.

Cease then, my brother, to make proselytes. Therein consists the superiority of the Sanatana Dharma. Its sages never made lip or creed converts, nor want to. They want the conversion of the heart and the Buddhi. With clarion-voice they have in all ages and climes called on man to the worship and love of God, to the tasting of

the sweets of blissful union with God. Therefore invite man to the embracing of the Divine life, welcome him to the holy and joyful feast of God-intoxication, worship of humanity, cosmos and the cosmic movement, and thus join God and His servants in the blissful work of purifying, ennobling and spiritualising the cult and culture, the civilisation and the entire life, individual and collective.

Even so in internationalism. It is not by a League of Nations, however perfect its constitution and machinery, however pious and holy its intentions and its ways of dealing with countries, that international feuds and strifes, jealousies and cut-throat rivalries can be ended but by a frank recognition of the old Vedic truth, "God is our father, Earth our mother, and Agni and other gods our brothers", and actual practice of it in every day life and making sincere, intrepid, withal enlightened and puissant efforts to realise the holy earth state, the divine communism on earth, to end this era of national states and to take the first step to the erection and progressive realisation of the one unified human state, that international warfare can be terminated.

No lands have to be conquered here, no peoples to be enthralled or exterminated, but all human beings to be united by a bond of divine brotherhood and sisterhood even as to-day nationals are united by a bond of materialistic patriotism. Freedom, equality and unity will be the tripod on which this divine state will stand firmly rooted, and godliness and love will be the unifying cement holding together its various members.

There will be then no international feuds and hence no need for a judicial tribunal like the Hague Conference or the League of Nations to arbitrate between the contending powers, as there are to-day no inter-village, country, provincial, sect, caste or community feuds and wars in a homogeneous national state and hence no such tribunals as inter-communal, or inter-provincial ones, to arbitrate between their quarrels. There will be then only individual troubles, just as there are to-day in every national civilised state, and those it is very easy to pacify

and settle without resort to the sword or proclamation of war. In fact, in every civilised state such a thing as war between any two or more parts thereof is unknown. Any villages or districts cannot even think of going to war with each other or of engaging in any quarrels, for there is no such thing as separate district states.

It is sheer barbarism for a robbed, hurt or wronged person to retaliate on the robber, the hurter or the wrong-doer; nay, according to the Penal Codes of civilised countries, it is a crime on the part of the wronged and outraged person to take the law into his own hands. Is it not an equally detestable barbarism and abominable crime for an outraged or wronged nation to take the law into her own hands, to seek to retaliate upon the outraging and wrong-doing nation? Cannot the European nations that often break out into war with each other, for trivial injuries and insults, or for mean, sordid earthly gains like those of wealth, commerce or territory, see this truth so patent to us? Will they not exert to shake off this barbarism, this last vestige of the beast and cannibal still clinging to them and making them so ugly, so abominable and withal withholding from them or making them unfit to imagine and relish the sweet "Amrita" of a truly civilised, holy, spiritual life?

Nation shall not war upon nation, groups shall not scourge and flog groups. But unfortunately this is the barbarism of the 20th century evolved out and largely practised by Europe—this organised group warfare and vandalism. As long as any group is allowed to organise its group brute-force for defensive or offensive purposes against any other group, so long will civilisation remain a mockery and man a beast. No individual is to-day permitted in any state to organise and develop his physical force for forcing his will upon another or satisfying his passion for revenge, for the punishing of a wrong-doer is rightly deemed the exclusive prerogative of society and the state. So no group or nation shall be permitted to organise itself and its physical force for defensive or offensive purposes against any other group or nation. In fact,

groups must be disarmed, and the disarmament is not possible without the different groups and nations ceasing to exist and function as separate entities—I mean without the disbandment, the dissolution of the groups and nations. There shall be no nations, as in the era of the rise of the nation state the fiat went, "There shall be no Baron states, no fiefs, no district or provincial states."

The disarmament is the consummation, of which the disbandment is the beginning. Dissolve the nations. Exert to create the earth state, the universal state, the holy state of humaniy, and the disarmament will then inevitably follow. There will be then only individuals as members or citizens of the earth state and not as now nations that alone are the contracting powers in the League of Nations or the now defunct Hague Conference.

This is the true foundation of an everlasting peace on earth. This also is the only true and sure foundation of any plans and schemes for a reconstruction of society on holy and godly basis. As we have to-day peace in a nation state, we shall have peace on earth, if we have the earth state, in which not nations but human beings in their individual state shall be the members and citizens.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

उद्धव उवाच ।

यमः कतिविधः प्रोक्तो नियमो वास्किर्शन ॥

कः शमः को दमः कृष्ण का तितिक्षा धृतिः प्रभो ॥ २८ ॥

Uddhava said :

28. Of how many kinds is Yama,¹ O Chastiser of foes, and Niyama² also? What is calmness, and what is self-control, O Krishna? What is fortitude, and what is patience, O Lord?

[¹Yama—Universal moral observances.

²Niyama—Particular moral observances.]

किं दानं किं तपः शौर्यं किं सत्यमृतमुच्यते ॥

कस्त्यागः किं धनं चेष्टं को यज्ञः का च दक्षिणा ॥ २६ ॥

29. What is charity? What is penance? What is valour? What is honesty, and what is truthfulness? What is renunciation? What is wealth worth coveting? What is sacrifice, and what is religious remuneration?

पुंसः किं स्विद्बलं श्रीमन्मगो लाभश्च केशव ॥

का विद्या ह्रीः परा का श्रीः किं सुखं दुःखमेव च ॥ ३० ॥

30. What is the strength of a man, O Sire? What is fortune, and what is profit, O Keshava? What is learning? What is shyness? What is the highest beauty? What is happiness, and what is misery?

कः पण्डितः कश्च मूर्खः कः पन्था उत्पथश्च कः ॥

कः स्वर्गो नरकः कः स्वित्कोबन्धुरुत किं गृहम् ॥ ३१ ॥

31. Who is a scholar, and who is a fool? What is the way, and what is its reverse? What is heaven, and what is hell? Who is a friend, and what is a house?

क आढ्यः को दरिद्रो क कृपणः क ईश्वरः ॥

एतान्प्रश्नान्मम ब्रूहि विपरीतांश्च सत्पते ॥ ३२ ॥

32. Who is rich, and who is poor? Who is mean, and who is lordly? O Lord of the virtuous, answer these questions of mine, together with their opposites.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयमसङ्गो ह्रीरसंचयः ॥

आस्तिक्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं च मौनं शौर्यं क्षमाभयम् ॥ ३३ ॥

The Lord said :

33. Non-injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, non-attachment, shyness, non-accumulation of wealth, faith in God, chastity, silence, patience, forgiveness, fearlessness.

[This enumeration differs from that of Patanjali, who in his Yoga Aphorism II. 30 mentions only five virtues under this head. The same is the case with Niyama also in the next verse.]

शौचं जपस्तपो होमः श्रद्धातिथ्यं मदर्चनम् ॥

तीर्थाटनं परार्थे हा तुष्टिराचार्यसेवनम् ॥ ३४ ॥

34. Purity¹ of mind and body, repetition of the Lord's name, austerity, offering of oblations in the sacred fire, faith in one's self, hospitality, worship of Me, visiting of holy places, working for the good of others, contentment, and service unto the teacher.

[¹Purity—This should be counted as two.]

एते यमाः सनियमा उभयोर्द्वादश स्मृताः ॥

पुंसामुपासितास्तात यथाकामं दुहन्ति हि ॥ ३५ ॥

35. These groups of twelve virtues enumerated in the above two verses constitute the Yamas and the Niyamas. These, my friend, if rightly practised by men, surely produce results¹ according to their desires.

[¹Result &c.—i.e. liberation or material prosperity according as the person practising them is free from desires or possessed of desires.]

शमो मन्त्रिष्ठता बुद्धेर्दम इन्द्रियसंयमः ॥

तितिक्षा दुःखसंमर्षो जिह्वोपस्थजयो धृतिः ॥ ३६ ॥

36. Calmness is a steady attachment of the mind to Me. Self-control is control of the sense-organs. Fortitude is the bearing of grief. Patience is a perfect control over the palate and sex-impulse.

[It will be seen that the Lord in most cases gives novel interpretations of His own, which, differing as they do from the popular notions of the terms, lend a peculiar piquancy to them. For instance, calmness is not mere control of the mind, but its being fixed on the Lord. Similarly in the other cases.]

दानं दानं परं दानं कामत्यागस्तपः स्मृतम् ॥

स्वभावविजयः शौर्यं सत्यं च समदर्शनम् ॥ ३७ ॥

37. The highest charity is the relinquishing of the idea of violence towards beings. Penance is the giving

up of desires. Valour is the conquest of one's nature. Honesty is looking upon everything with an equal eye.

[¹Giving up &c.—not undergoing austerities merely.]

ऋतं च सुनृता वाणी कविभिः परिकीर्तिता ॥

कर्मस्वसंगमः शौचं त्यागः संन्यास उच्यते ॥ ३८ ॥

38. Truthfulness is true and agreeable speech which the sages praise. Purity¹ is non-attachment to work, and renunciation is the giving up of work.

[¹Purity—This is introduced to distinguish renunciation from it.]

धर्म इष्टं धनं नृणां यज्ञोऽहं भगवत्तमः ॥

दक्षिणा ज्ञानसंदेशः प्राणायामः परं बलम् ॥ ३९ ॥

39. Religion is that wealth which men may covet. I, the Supreme Lord, am the sacrifice. The imparting of knowledge is religious remuneration. The highest strength is the control of Prana.

भगो म ऐश्वरो भावो लाभो मद्भक्तिरुत्तमः ॥

विद्यात्मनि मिदावाधो जुगुप्सा हीरकर्मसु ॥ ४० ॥

40. Fortune is My Divine State. The best profit is devotion to Me. Learning is the destruction of the idea of multiplicity in the Self. Shyness is abhorrence of evil deeds.

श्रीगुणा नैरपेक्ष्याद्याः सुखं दुःखसुखात्ययः ॥

दुःखं कामसुखापेक्षा पण्डितो बन्धमोक्षवित् ॥ ४१ ॥

41. Beauty consists in virtues such as a spirit of independence. Happiness is the transcending of pleasure and pain. Misery is the hankering after sense-pleasures. A scholar is one who can distinguish between bondage and liberation.

मूर्खो देहाद्यहंबुद्धिः पन्था मन्निगमः स्मृतः ॥

उत्पथश्चित्तविक्षेपः स्वर्गः सत्त्वगुणोदयः ॥ ४२ ॥

42. A fool is one who identifies oneself with the body, etc. The right way is that which leads to Me.

The wrong way is that¹ which causes disturbance of the mind. Heaven is the rise of Sattva² in the mind.

[¹That &c.—i.e. seeking material prosperity.

²Sattva—blessed qualities]

नरकस्तमउन्नाहो बन्धुर्गुरुरहं सखे ॥

गृहं शरीरं मानुष्यं गुणाढ्यो ह्याढ्य उच्यते ॥ ४३ ॥

43. Hell is the rise of Tamas in the mind. The teacher, who is no other than Myself, is the friend, O Uddhava. The human body is the home. He indeed is called rich who is rich in virtues.

दग्निद्रो यस्त्वसंतुष्टः कृपणो योऽजितेन्द्रियः ॥

गुणेष्वसक्तधीरीशो गुणसङ्गो विपर्ययः ॥ ४४ ॥

44. One who is discontented is poor. He who is not a master of his senses is mean. One who is not attached to sense-objects is lordly. One who is attached to sense-objects is the reverse¹ of him.

[¹Reverse: The Lord mentions only one opposite quality, as an illustration. The others are to be inferred.]

एन उद्धव ते प्रश्नाः सर्वे साधु निरूपिताः ॥

किं वर्णितेन बहुना लक्षणं गुणदोषयोः ॥

गुणदापद्दृशिर्दोषो गुणस्तूभयवर्जितः ॥ ४५ ॥

45. Here, O Uddhava, I have fully answered all your questions. Well, what is the use of dilating on the characteristics of merit and defect? Defect is distinguishing between merit and defect, and to be free from both is merit.

THE SIXTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

BELUR.

The sixty-third birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with great eclat at the Ramakrishna Math, Belur (Howrah), the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, on 10th January, 1925. Swamiji's memorial temple was tastefully decorated, and there were appropriate special observances, such as worship, and Homa, etc., at daytime and at night. Devotional music by experts also formed an interesting item. About two thousand devotees and poor Narayanas were treated to Prasad. In the afternoon a meeting was held under the presidency of Swami Abhedananda, in which addresses on the life and teachings of the great Swami were delivered by a number of speakers, among whom were Sj. Lalit Mohan Ghoshal and his daughter. Four young men got their initiation into Brahmacharya or lifelong vow of celibacy on this auspicious day, to carry into practice Swami Vivekananda's ideal of renunciation and service.

PATNA.

Under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Moradpur, Patna, the above anniversary was celebrated in a befitting manner. On the 18th January a procession, which bespoke rare originality of conception, was taken through some of the principal streets of the town, and made a profound impression on the minds of the spectators. Representative portraits or symbols of Hinduism, Mahomedanism and Christianity were carried in motor-cars, amid batches of music-players and standard-bearers in appropriate costume. At the end was a large portrait of Swami Vivekananda on an elephant. On the 24th January there was a musical and athletic competition in which Hindu and Mahomedan students of all the local schools took part. Medals and prizes were awarded to

the successful candidates. The same evening, a largely attended meeting was held, presided over by the Hon'ble Justice Kulawant Sahay of Patna, in which Swami Abhedananda, Prof. Jadunath Sarkar and others spoke on the life and teachings of Swamiji. On the next day about three thousand poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed with Puris, etc. This was followed by a Kirtan in the evening on 'Sri Chaitanya renouncing the world,' which had an appreciative audience of four or five hundred respectable men and women, who were served with Prasad before they dispersed. The festival came off successfully in every detail.

BOMBAY.

The birthday was celebrated with great success at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Khar Road, Bandra, Bombay. This year the occasion was graced by the presence of Srimat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, the revered head of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The Tithi, which fell on 17th January, was observed with special Puja and offerings. A life-size portrait of the Swami was tastefully decorated in the Ashrama hall. A good number of devotees, representing various communities, met there to offer their worship and join in the festivities. There was music by expert singers, as also a charming concert organised by some of the Bengali residents of Bombay. The function came to a close with the partaking of Prasad.

The public celebration took place on the 18th January in a spacious pandal erected for the occasion on a plot of land adjoining the Ashrama. There was a large and representative gathering, including men of light and leading of Bombay. The morning programme consisted of Bhajan, Music and Prabachan by Mr. Dhurandhar. Swami Sharvananda made a short speech. About 200 people including the children of the local depressed classes were fed. The public meeting was a grand success. Mr. M. R. Jayakar presided. Mr. K. Nataranjan, Mr. G. B. Trivedi, Mr. G. K. Devdhar, Prof.

N. G. Damble, Mr. Mavji Govindji, Dr. Rajavally Patel, Mr. F. J. Ginwala, Principal S. V. Puntambeker and Swami Sharvananda spoke eloquently on different aspects of Swami Vivekananda's life, teachings and mission.

MADRAS.

The celebration came off successfully at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mylapore, Madras. Special religious service was performed, and about 3000 poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed. Some pieces of cloth left over after the recent Southern India flood relief were also distributed. There was a good arrangement of lectures by eminent speakers and a Harikatha. Three or four hundred devotees also took Prasad.

BANGALORE.

The birthday was celebrated with great eclat at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bull Temple Road, Bangalore. The 17th of January was the day of the Tithi Puja on which there was special worship almost all through the day. In the evening there was Bhajan.

On the 18th, the day of public celebration, Bhajan parties from different parts of the city came to the Ashrama at noon and carried in procession the portraits of Swamiji and Sri Ramakrishna. They adjourned near the Anjaneya temple, where nearly a thousand people of the poorer classes were fed. In the afternoon Brahmasri Kesava Das, a local official, engaged the assembled people in the Ashrama pandal by his Kalakshepam on the life of Prahlad. Mr. K. Subramanya Sastry, a teacher of a local high school, next gave a lecture in Kannda, recounting the salient points in the life of Swamiji. Mr. M. Sadasiva Rao, B.A., B.L., was the English speaker of the day. He read a thoughtful paper, emphasising the special features of Swamiji's life and teachings. With a vote of thanks to the lecturers, Arati and distribution of Prasad the meeting terminated.

RANGOON.

The birthday was celebrated by the admirers and disciples of the Swami with success under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Society at the Reddier High School Hall, Rangoon, on the 18th January. A picture of the Swami was hung up artistically in one corner of the *dais* with a flower garland around it. In the evening there were recitations from Swamiji's poems and a prayer. Seven gentlemen of different nationalities spoke eloquently on the life, teachings and mission of Swamiji. Mr. B. Cowasji, B.A., Bar-at-Law, presided over the deliberations. Of the different speakers Mr. H. M. Ghosh, Pleader and Congress-worker of Mymensingh, in particular held the audience spell-bound by his poetic and most interesting way of explaining the message of Swamiji. The proceedings came to a close after a vote of thanks to the President, the lecturers and the audience.

DACCA.

In the Ramakrishna Math, Ramna, Dacca, the birthday celebrations were observed in an imposing manner. Over 5000 poor Narayanas were heartily treated to Prasad. A meeting also was held in which Prof. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar and other distinguished gentlemen delivered impressive speeches on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda. The presence of Swami Nirmalananda, whose conversations are being greatly appreciated by the Dacca public, lent an additional importance to the day's proceedings.

MALDA.

The birthday celebration under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Seva Samity, Malda, was a grand success. The 17th of January was purely devoted to worship and Bhajan. On the 18th, there was a procession carrying the portrait of Swamiji, joined by people of all classes. In the afternoon a fairly attended meeting.

presided over by Sj. Janaki Nath Banerjee, B.A., B.L., Sub-Judge, Pabna, was held at the local theatre. Sj. Kaliranjan Lahiri, Pleader, read a paper depicting the life and teachings of Swamiji, and the different traits of Swamiji's character in the different stages of his life were painted nicely by Kaviraj Lalbehari Majumdar, Sj. Beni Prasad Neogi, the Senior Dy. Magistrate, and Sj. Sarasilal Sarkar, the Civil Surgeon.

BENARES.

The anniversary was duly celebrated at the Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Luxa, Benares City. Besides special worship and Bhajan, the feeding of over a thousand poor Narayanas and devotees formed the chief function of the day. Under the presidentship of Swami Saradananda, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, a meeting was held in which Swami Nikhilananda delivered an address in English on the great Swamiji's life and message. Swami Nikhilananda also read a paper in Bengali on the same subject. The President concluded the proceedings of the meeting with an eloquent speech in Bengali.

KANKHAL.

The birthday was celebrated at the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Hardwar, with great success. On the 17th of January was observed the Tithi Puja with special worship. The hall with a big portrait of Swamiji was tastefully decorated, and people of different classes gathered to show their homage to the Swami and join in the festivity. In the evening there was Arati and Bhajan. The public celebration, of which the feeding of the Daridra Narayanas was a special feature, took place on the 25th. Many Sadhus and gentlemen graced the occasion by their presence at the meeting that was held, and some impressive speeches were made on the life and teachings of Swamiji. Among others Swami Adwaitananda, the late editor of the G. I. P. Union

Herald, Bombay, depicted the mission of Swamiji in a thoughtful paper in Hindi. The celebration came to a happy close with Bhajan in Bengali, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

KOTAHENA, COLOMBO.

The birthday was celebrated at the Hindu Dharma Samaj, Kotahena, Colombo, on the 17th of January. A largely attended meeting was held in the afternoon at the hall of the Samaj with Mr. A. Vaidyalingam in the chair. Mr. P. S. Sivaswami spoke nicely on the message of Swamiji. Next Swami Lavananda thrilled the audience by narrating some interesting incidents from Swamiji's Parivrajaka life. After him Pandit Nallathamby of the Yahiva College delivered a scholarly lecture on the Hindu modes of worship, and there were comments on his lecture. With a vote of thanks to the chair the meeting terminated.

OTHER PLACES.

The anniversary was also celebrated at Ramakrishna Ashrama, Panchakhandi, Beanibazar, Sylhet; Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama Trivandrum, Travancore; and other places in India and abroad.

NEWS AND NOTES.

THE COTTAGE INDUSTRIES.

India is in the position of that man who had to dig a well for drinking water although he was on the very banks of the Ganges. If we but look to the economic condition of this country, the truth of this statement will be brought home to our minds. India is a vast continent, richly endowed with all nature's gifts in the shape of varieties of climate, hills, forests, lakes, rivers, mineral resources and all kinds of raw products in great abundance ; man-power, too, is not lacking. Strange to say that compared with other countries which do not possess even a tithe of these facilities, India occupies the lowest rung in the ladder of industrial development.

Two different and conflicting accounts are usually given to explain this anomaly. From the Government side, it is usually given out that the main obstacle to rapid improvement in the industrial position is found in the fact that the fabulous hoarded wealth of India is very shy to enter new fields of investment. In the shape of minor difficulties, such charges as lack of enterprise, want of mutual trust and the spirit of co-operation on the part of the people are usually advanced. With regard to the first contention, viz. that the Indian capital is shy, one cannot altogether acquit the Government of all responsibility in the matter. Time and again, people who have had anything to do with industrial enterprises, both big and small, have made this complaint that at best they have but received a step-motherly treatment from the Government. And the suspicion that the interests of the British manufacturer carry such weight and influence with the Whitehall authorities that not unoften India has to suffer.

It is not necessary for us here to enter into a careful scrutiny of these statements, but we shall content our-

selves with pointing out what the State can do in the matter of promoting cottage industries which we believe are not only peculiarly suited to Indian conditions but also have no possibility of competing with imported foreign goods. It is no doubt true that recently an industrial department has been opened in each of the provinces, and in some places even an economic survey has been made. But we are afraid that the knowledge of these facts has not been brought sufficiently within the reach of the masses of people. Again, the few industrial schools which one comes across in various parts of India by themselves are not able to do much in the matter, for the reason that the peasant, even when convinced of the advantages of giving his sons the technical education available in the schools, cannot afford to spare them, as they all contribute their share in the cultivation of the lands. To obviate this difficulty, a peripatetic technical school coupled with the demonstration might be tried as an experiment.

The mere imparting of technical instruction under the conditions peculiar to India, such as the indebtedness of the peasants with little or no credit at their command, cannot be productive of much good unless the Government help them to find the necessary capital to start with. In this connection, it must be acknowledged that the co-operative credit and other societies have done something, but the vast majority of the peasant class are not in a position to take advantage of such organisations. If the raw materials, the few tools and machinery, and the small initial outlay could be advanced as a loan to all who would start any cottage industry, and the products are purchased by the industrial department, or any such control agency at fair current market-rates and a small percentage of the wages retained towards the advance, a good impetus could be given to the village industries. More than all the paper schemes that could be devised, it is the earnestness and the solicitude of the State for the welfare of the people that really counts in the matter, and until the rulers learn to identify their prosperity with

that of the people, the most ideal devices may not end in real progress.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER IN BOMBAY.

Invited by some friends and admirers of the Mission, our President, Srīmat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, went to Bombay. On the 16th of January, an address of welcome was presented to the Swami by the Western India Vivekananda Society in a public meeting held at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall with Mr. M. R. Jayakar in the chair. Besides the members of the Society, there was a fairly large attendance of Hindu, Mohammedan and Parsi gentlemen and ladies on the occasion.

The Chairman, introducing the Swami to the audience, referred to the many qualities of his head and heart and the noble work he had been doing as the head of the Mission. Then Mr. G. P. Murdeswar, Secretary of the Society, read the address of welcome which was full of loving and appreciative touches. The Swami in reply spoke a few words acknowledging with thanks the love and appreciation of the gathering and hoped that the people of Bombay would make ample use of the Ashrama started by the Mission for the spread of the universal teachings of the Vedānta philosophy and religion. He called upon Swami Sharvananda, President of the Madras Centre, to speak on his behalf and explain the ideals of the Mission. Then Mr. G. K. Devdhar spoke a few words, after which, with a vote of thanks to the guest of the evening, the meeting came to a close.

We are glad to learn that by the influence of some local sympathisers, the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama of Bombay has been able to secure a plot of land in the Khar Model Suburb Area, and on the 6th of February, our President laid the foundation stone of the Centre with due ceremony and solemnity.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निकोषत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT
KANKHAL.*

(Continued from p. 103).

A few days later when the Swami was able to walk about a little, he came to my room. Seeing Sri Ramakrishna's photo on my table, he said, "He stands alone, there is none like him. Keshab Chandra Sen one day took him to a photographer. He asked Sri Ramakrishna to stand quietly for a moment. He obeyed like a child, and the picture was taken."

The Swami asked me whether I received many letters. "Not many," I replied. Then he said, "Only as we give, do we receive. If we love others, others will love us."

* From the next issue we shall present our readers with a series of inspiring talks with Swami Turiyananda at Benares.—Ed., P.B.

In the afternoon I went to his room and found Swami Premananda there. He was eating fried grains. "Wait, Swami," I said, "I will bring you a little salt." When I came back, Swami Turiyananda, quoting from the Bible, said, 'Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?' How powerful are the words of Jesus ! 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.' He was the true Sannyasin."

"Living in India," I said, "gives one a better understanding of the Bible. The Biblical stories are enacted here everyday. I can picture Jesus' life much better since I have seen how the Sannyasins live. To be here is a wonderful experience."

"Yes," the Swami replied, "and you see it with the eyes of a monk."

Then I spoke about Lady Minto's visit to the Belur Math. She had asked the monks there what Sri Ramakrishna taught. One had answered, 'He taught from the Hindu scriptures.' When the Swami heard this, he said, "His words were scripture. He taught more even than the scriptures. But he himself used to say that everything he taught could be found in our scriptures."

"Did not his teachings differ somewhat from Sankaracharya's Maya theory?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "Sankara taught only one phase, how to get freedom, Nirvana. Our Master first made free and then taught how one should live in the world. His touch would make one free. But those who follow his instructions, also get free. His words had such Sakti (power). Be free first. Do away with

name and form and the entire universe. Then see Mother in all. Then be Her playfellow. We don't care for Nirvana; we want to serve the Lord. We have touched the grand-dame and cannot be made thief again." (Sri Ramakrishna used to say: As in the play of hide-and-seek the person touching the grand-dame is free to go wherever he chooses without being pursued and made a thief of, so also in this world's playground there is no fear for him who has touched the feet of the Almighty. He attains freedom from all worldly cares and anxieties, and nothing can ever bind him again.) "When life becomes painful we go to Her, and remembering Her, get peace. Sri Ramakrishna taught from simple things in everyday life. Therefore we are constantly reminded of him. He taught us to see Mother in everything—in trees, in flowers, in insects, in human beings. Alive or dead, we are always in Mother. First realise this, and then remember it constantly. Then the world cannot taint us. How difficult life is without Her. But with Her it becomes easy. Then we are fearless."

The doctor now entered the room. After examining the Swami, he said, "He will be all right soon, if he is careful. He is still very weak. It will take a little time."

When the doctor had left I asked the Swami whether his mind had not become weak when his body was so weak. "No," he replied, "for the mind has something to rest on." "On Mother," I said. "Exactly," he replied. "Ordinary people identify themselves with the mind. I have seen my mind as something separate from me. How then can I identify myself

with the mind again? I realised my critical condition, but I had no fear."

Later in the day I read to him from the notes taken during his Gita classes in the Shanti Ashrama (California). He enjoyed the reading. Then he told me his experiences during his pilgrimage to Kedar Nath. He and two other Swamis had gone for days without food; then they were caught in a snow-storm and were ready to give up their lives in meditation. But they found a miserable hut where they spent the night. The following day they reached a village and got food.

When I came to his room again, he began at once, "What we know we must bring into practice, at least once. But Sri Ramakrishna practised everything three times. Through practice new knowledge comes. Do something, practise! Bondage and freedom are both in the mind. Atman is beyond mind."

"Can one who has realised do wrong acts?" I asked.

"Some say, 'yes,' " he replied, " 'through their past Karma.' But for them it is not sin. They are unattached. No new Karma is created in their case. They can do or abstain from doing, as they please, at their will. They are the masters of their mind. Try to live with those who have mastered the mind. If you cannot live with them, think of them. Mind controls mind. The mind can be concentrated in many ways, through meditation, singing, reading, etc. Always watch your mind. Be the master of senses and mind.

'May we hear with our ears what is right and good;
May we see with our eyes what is holy and beautiful;
May we keep our body and mind under control.'

Om tat sat."

In the course of our conversation, Latu Maharaj (Swami Adbhutananda) was brought up. One amongst us said, "He had no education." "But he is a wonderfully spiritual man," I said, "and he knows the Shastras (scriptures)." "He not only knows the Shastras," the Swami interposed, "but he is the Shastras personified. He lived with our Lord."

Towards evening a party of pilgrims came to see the Swami. One of the men remarked that meditation is dangerous without a Guru. The Swami did not agree with him. "Pranayama (breathing exercise) is dangerous," he said, "without proper instruction, but not meditation. In the sixth chapter of the Gita you will find instructions for meditation."

Another pilgrim wanted to know something about the Swami's experiences in the West. The Swami smiled and said, "The West is materialistic, the land of enjoyment. But there are many good things. The food is superior. Everything is done in a scientific way, even cooking. And sanitation is much better. They are strong and healthy people. The women have much more freedom, and they are all educated. There is more privacy in the West, and their dress is fit for action. Here everything is for inaction. We are not so energetic. Everyone in the West speaks in a subdued voice, and the servants receive much better treatment than with us. Even the humblest servant is treated with respect. Work is no disgrace. A man is a man, no matter what his occupation is. But he must obey the laws of society. There are no outcasts and no *don't-touchism*. Think of how we treat our low-caste people!"

A young man among the pilgrims, unsettled as to

what he should do, asked the Swami's advice. "Think of God, and He will help you," was the reply. A Brahmachari entered the room with the Swami's dinner. The pilgrims bowed down and left. "Man shall not live by bread alone," the Swami quoted, "but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Then he said, "The little book you gave me on Socrates is very nice. It is not so spiritual, but perhaps it was the best teaching for the time. It is man-making. Socrates taught and lived what he taught. He was a great man. And that man the world killed!"

Speaking about a person who had received ill-treatment from others, the Swami said, "He had no ill feeling. That is wonderful, the true Christian spirit. That is Mother's grace. She has him by the hand. Always remember that whatever befalls us is Mother's doing for our good. Mother will keep him always, I am sure. Of course, at times he felt it, but that he realised as a weakness. Why should we feel miserable at bad treatment? But everyone is weak at times; and then we suffer. If Mother is near, what otherwise would be suffering is no longer suffering. We should not judge harshly those who try to harm us. Never lose faith in Mother. Faith keeps us. Everyone feels depressed at times, but all do not show it."

Later he said, "When I get a letter from you, I get a picture of your mental state, and I answer as by inspiration, without much thought."

The following day I found Swami Premananda, Swami Kalyanananda and others in his room. The talk was on Swamiji's work in the West. "Swamiji was fearless," the Swami said. "He always taught the

highest without compromise. Always giving, giving, asking nothing in return. Others give a drop, and want a bucketful in return."

Swami Premananda remarked, "We have seen two men, our Master and Swamiji. No other man can be compared with them." Swami Turiyananda agreed and said, "When I saw Sri Ramakrishna for the first time he was much emaciated, but his face was shining. He came to Calcutta in a carriage. When he left the carriage he walked like one intoxicated. He was in Samadhi. I thought, 'Is this Suka Deva come again?' Once when he came out of Samadhi, he asked, 'Who am I? Where am I?' Then he asked for something to eat. But before he ate it, he was again in Samadhi."

Swami Premananda and Turiyananda now sang together in Bengali some of the songs Sri Ramakrishna used to sing. One of the songs was about the black bee tasting the honey of the blue lotus, forgetting all other flowers. So the mind should rest at the blue feet of Kali, forgetting all the world. Swami Premananda imitated the way in which Sri Ramakrishna sang and also his gestures. "Sri Ramakrishna sang very beautifully," he said, "and he could not bear it when others sang out of tune."

In the afternoon the Swami read from "The Master as I Saw Him." When I entered the room he laid aside the book and said, "Realisation is to see Mother in all—to treat and love all alike. That is the blessed life, to see the Shining One behind the external."

The following morning the Swami was not feeling well. He had a slight fever and tooth-ache. He said, "Mother is kind to send pain. It is for our good. Only

we are so self-loving, we do not realise it. We must depend on Her alone, and nothing else." "But," I asked, "must we depend on Her for our external wants?" "Certainly," he replied, "for everything. Our body, mind and soul are given to Mother. Whom else then should we depend on? Let Her give, or let Her take, it is all the same. Why should we care? When once given how can we demand again? Blessed is he who can realise this."

SWAMI ATULANANDA.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Sri Ramakrishna, the Prophet of Dakshineswar, was the latest manifestation of a tremendous spiritual power destined to bring about a fresh adjustment in the world's thought-currents and thus do an incalculable amount of good to humanity. He was one of those outstanding personalities who themselves realise the Truth, the summum bonum of life, and leave behind as a heritage the potent seeds of their Sadhana from which the posterity reap a rich harvest and are immensely profited. He was one of those God-men, who themselves get the highest Illumination and become also the medium through whom millions and millions of thirsty souls get peace in life. It is of such world-moving figures that the scripture speaks of as : "तीर्णाः स्वयं भीमभवार्णवं जनानहेतुनान्यानपि तारयन्तः ।"— "Having themselves crossed the mighty ocean of birth and death, they save others also out of their infinite disinterested love." They are the saviours of mankind and are the salt of the earth. They come at different periods of the world's history and direct the course of individual

and collective life towards a supreme ideal. They are born with a Divine mission which is to establish peace and order by enforcing the supremacy of the moral and spiritual laws whenever there is chaos and confusion in any part of the world owing to the decadence of the higher ideals of life.

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In the beginning of the nineteenth century after the military occupation of the land by the British, a danger of a graver nature became imminent and threatened the very existence of India. On account of various reasons the country presented a scene of infernal confusion which was about to break piecemeal the entire social fabric. The true ideals and rules of conduct were flouted, and blind usages and superstitions of all sorts passed current. The spirit of religion which was to evolve the latent possibilities of the soul and conduce to individual and communal welfare by bringing into play the supreme virtues of purity, renunciation, love and service, was neglected, and the observance of meaningless rituals and ceremonials masqueraded as spiritual excellence. Society became a medley, as it were, of sects, discordant and quarrelling with one another, and abounded in customs having no moral or religious sanction. Naturally it proved to be the butt of contempt and criticism for foreigners. The educated section of the country trained in English educational institutions and dazzled by the superficial glamour of foreign secularism began to question their own past—their scripture, tradition and civilisation. A cultural conquest which is worse and more demoralising than a military conquest, became almost inevitable. But by the inscrutable will of Providence it was not to be. India though

conquered physically is destined to conquer her conquerors, nay, the whole world, by her innate spiritual greatness, even as Greece conquered her conqueror Rome. The dormant spiritual consciousness of the Hindu race gradually woke up, gathered strength and tried to assert itself as it had done many times before in the past.



The waters of a streamlet falling in a cataract have a greater force and velocity. In the ocean the wave that rises after a hollow swells higher. After a devastating hurricane nature puts forth an appearance of greater calmness. In the same way, after every spell of decline, the human society recovers itself from the evils and rises more glorious and powerful, and we see a renaissance in all the walks of its life. History bears ample testimony to the fact. Hence it is natural that the Hindu society after this period of decadence should rise invincible. We believe, and we think we are right in believing, that with the advent of Sri Ramakrishna, a marvellous combination of the highest ideals and loftiest principles made real in life, a new era of awakening and progress has commenced in our land. By his realisation of the Eternal Verity in all its phases and shades from different standpoints, he has called into being a wave of spiritual power, immense in its depth and sweep, that is silently, but surely and steadily, working for the regeneration of India, and through India the whole world. Even as 'the gentle dew that falls on the ground unknown and unheard and yet brings into bloom a mass of beautiful, sweet-smelling roses,' the influence of the life and teachings of this God-man has

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already made itself felt. Those who have eyes must see the signs of the time and acknowledge the fact.



Sri Ramakrishna stood as a remarkable witness to the truth, reality and glory of the Hindu religion. His was a life into which were crowded the entire spiritual consciousness and realisation of the Hindu race from the Vedic down to the modern times. His was a life that may be likened to a powerful search-light, under the illumination of which one can read and understand clearly the true significance and inner spirit of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Tantras and other Hindu scriptures. In one word, he was the personification of the Sanatana Dharma. His incarnation was in fulfilment of the promise made by the Lord in the Gita: "Whenever there is decline of Dharma and rise of Adharma, then I body Myself forth." Verily Sri Ramakrishna was born to demonstrate what the true religion of the Hindus is, to prove that there is a fundamental unity and harmony amidst all its many apparently conflicting sects and divisions, and above all to rejuvenate the ancient civilisation by rehabilitating the spiritual ideal. He may be called the meeting place of the real India that is past and of the real India that is to be. With him as the source will issue forth a flood of light that will illumine India and the whole world. The field is just being prepared for the working of the spiritual energy embodied in that saintly life, and we who believe it and recognise the signs of the time, wait silently for the consummation of the Lila that has already begun.

The life of Sri Ramakrishna was so deep and profound that we cannot say that he was this and not that.

He may be called a living museum of spiritual ecstasies of various grades ranging from the highest indescribable state of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, in which the individual becomes one with the Universal, to an ordinary trance of spiritual joy. The natural trend of his soul being to be merged in the Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, he had to use sheer force, so that he might remain in the normal plane of consciousness and deal with the people of this world. In him we find a shining example of the culmination and harmony of the four paths, *viz.*, Jnana, Bhakti, Nishkama-Karma and Yoga. Again, he was one who could demonstrate clearly and tangibly that spirituality can be imparted and infused to the initiate; not only that, but he had the power to make the sinner a saint. Time and space were playthings to him. A touch, a glance or a mere wish, was sometimes enough in his case to make years and even lives of spiritual effort and struggle crowd themselves into a moment and raise a man from the ordinary plane to a lofty altitude of spiritual bliss. He was indeed a dynamo of spiritual energy ready to burst sometimes and carry everything before it. Hence it is nothing strange that the frailties, narrow-mindedness or bigotry of ordinary people should have been altogether absent in his character.

Sri Ramakrishna knew not what egoism was, for he had identified his self with the Self of the universe. He was totally free from the passion of lust, for he had wholly controlled his flesh and learnt to look upon all women as veritable manifestations of the Divine Mother. There was not a trace of greed in him, for he had attained

that compared with which worldly gain and prosperity are trifles. He would not utter a word of condemnation against any sect or creed, for he had known by personal experience that the different religions are but the different paths leading to the same Goal, viz. God. As regards his religious views, he was, truly speaking, neither a Hindu, nor a Mohammedan, nor a Christian. He was neither a dualist, nor a qualified monist, nor a pure monist, in the strict sense of the term. Yet he was all these in one and more. His religion meant a living faith, an acceptance and tolerance of all creeds, of all 'isms' and systems of thought, and not an artificial eclecticism. His was a life that was unique in its realisation, blessedness, purity, renunciation and selfless love. It was one long stillness of meditation, ecstasy, compassion, and benediction, resting like a brooding presence over humanity to rescue it from the trials and tribulations of life.

Like professional teachers he was neither versed in the sacred lore, for, as the reader is perhaps aware, his education did not go beyond the knowledge of the alphabet, nor did he go about preaching and making converts. He simply lived the life of the Spirit, a life of silent consecration, in the temple-garden of Dakshineswar where he passed the major part of his eventful life. His sole concern was his God, the Soul of his soul, whom he termed the Divine Mother, and everything that he wanted came to be fulfilled. Teachers who were past-masters in the different creeds and systems of thought, came to him and became instruments in helping him forward and were themselves helped by his magnetic in-

fluence. Subsequently when he was established in the exalted state of Divine bliss and beatitude and felt that he should give himself away to humanity, scores of thirsty souls, men and women of different stations, flocked around him, drank freely of the words of wisdom flowing from his lips and were blessed. Even Westernised, half-sceptical, well-read intellectualists who had 'listened to Disraeli and Fawcett, Stanley and Max Müller and a whole host European scholars and divines' would come and sit spell-bound before that God-intoxicated man and return spiritually benefited. Along with these people came also, and was blessed that gifted young man, afterwards famous as Swami Vivekananda, who was to become the prime medium for consolidating his mission, carrying his message to the four corners of the globe, and that band of chosen disciples who were also to be the instruments in the working out of his cause. So great was his attraction and influence that even in his life-time, Dakshineswar used to be crowded like a place of pilgrimage by earnest seekers after truth from different parts of the country. Now that his spirit has been released from its mortal tenement, Sri Ramakrishna is more free to do his work of redemption in a wider scale. He has already captured thousands of hearts and is being literally worshipped as an incarnation of the Most High in hundreds of homes, in India and abroad.

To put in a nut-shell, Sri Ramakrishna who was nothing but the Time-spirit in flesh and blood, stood for three things. They are : First, religion is the greatest desideratum of life, and it is realisation of the Ultimate

Reality; secondly, all the religions are true, for they represent only the different paths leading to the same goal; lastly, religion is incompatible with worldliness and enjoyment. These three principles in the main furnish the practice, the theory and the pre-requisites of his whole gospel and are the panacea, when carried out in actual life, of the evils of this materialistic age. At this hour when lust and Mammon are the guiding forces determining individual and collective aspirations, when people all over the world have gone mad over the maximum of physical pleasure neglecting the culture of the soul, and when the nobler virtues of selfless love and service are about to be sacrificed at the altar of selfishness, greed and hatred—Sri Ramakrishna represents a saving power that is badly needed for a new adjustment. With his wonderful transcendental realisation and absolute chastity and holiness, he is a proof of the fact that the modern science with its vaunted achievement is groping in the dark and that everything short of God is vanity and vexation of spirit. With his teaching of the unity and harmony of religions, he is an object lesson to the warring sects, creeds and denominations. Sri Ramakrishna was the founder of no sect, for in him we find an ideal embodying some universal principles that may be claimed and followed by every sect of every creed. And if we make a sect out of him, we simply gratify a narrow sectarianism of our own. He was, so to say, an incarnation of truth that knows no limit of time and space, clime and age. May his life and teachings be a source of unfailing inspiration to us and lead us from darkness to Light !

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## SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND WORLD-PEACE.

Sri Ramakrishna was born in the beginning of the year 1836 and left the scene of his earthly career in the middle of the year 1886. As, when the lotus opens, the bees come of their own accord to seek the honey, so during the very life-time of this extraordinary man many thirsty souls flocked to him to drink the nectar flowing from his lips. Not only such celebrated men as the late Keshab Chandra Sen, Vijoy Krishna Goswami, Pratap Chandra Majumdar, Pandit Sasadhar Tarkachudamani and the like, but scores of men and women in various stations of life also went to him, sat at his feet and felt blessed by the mere sight of him. Within a decade or two of his passing away, his message and teachings were carried to all the world by his immediate disciples, the foremost of whom was Swami Vivekananda. To-day, we find hundreds of educated young men of respectable families renouncing the pleasures and enjoyments of the world, cheerfully undergoing difficulties of various kinds and ready even to lay down their lives for the sake of the ideals which Sri Ramakrishna stood for. In his name have sprung up institutions whose end and aim is to render all possible service to mankind without any distinction of caste, creed or colour. Not only this, but thousands and thousands are worshipping him in their hearts as one of the greatest of Divine Incarnations.

What is the secret of this unique phenomenon? The power and influence which Sri Ramakrishna exercised over his contemporaries and those who came in personal contact with him may be accounted for, only if we look at the wonderful life of spiritual illumination he lived and the catholic religious views he had. In the words of the late P. C. Majumdar—"His religion is his only recommendation. And what is this religion? It is orthodox Hinduism, but, Hinduism of a strange type. Ramakrishna Paramahansa is the worshipper of no particular

Hindu god. He is not a Shaiva, he is not a Shakta, he is not a Vaishnava, he is not a Vedantist. Yet he is *all these*. \* \* \* His religion, unlike the religion of ordinary Hindu Sadhus, does not mean too much dogma, or controversial proficiency, or the outward worship with flowers and sandal-wood, incense and offering. His religion means ecstasy, his worship means transcendental insight, his whole nature burns day and night with the permanent fire and fever of a strange faith and feeling. \* \* \* Nor is his reverence confined within Hinduism. For long days he subjected himself to various disciplines to realise the Mahomedan idea of an all-powerful Allah. He let his beard grow, he fed himself on Moslem diet, he continually repeated sentences from the Koran. His reverence for Christ is deep and genuine. He bows his head at the name of Jesus, honours the doctrine of his Sonship, and we believe he once or twice attended Christian places of worship. These ideas at all events show the catholic religious culture of this great Hindu saint."

With reference to Sri Ramakrishna's relation to Christianity, it may be pointed out that at the end of his Sadhana period, *i.e.* about 1874, he used to hear the Bible read to him and thus came to know about Christ and his religion. One day, in the garden-house of one of his devotees, he chanced to look at the picture of the Madonna with the Divine Child which engrossed his attention very much, and while reflecting on it a deep regard for Christ and the Christian church filled his heart, and he felt as if the picture had become living and effulgent. It is said, for three days thoughts of Jesus held complete sway over his mind, and he forgot all about the Divine Mother, and that on the fourth day he had a vision of Christ who embraced him and merged in his person.\* We also heard that he used to offer his sincere devotion and worship to Lord Buddha of whom he once remarked

\* For a fuller account of this and other fascinating aspects of his Sadhana the readers might, with advantage, refer to the pages of the recently published 'Life of Sri Ramakrishna' by the Adwaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas.

—“There is not the least doubt about Lord Buddha's being an Incarnation. There is no difference between his doctrines and those of the Vedic Jnana Kanda.” For all august personages, such as the founders of the Jaina religion and the ten Sikh Gurus he entertained a great regard. Along with the many pictures in his room, there was a small statue of Tirthankara Mahavira before which incense used to be burnt every morning and evening. He also shared the belief of the Sikhs that the Gurus were all incarnations of the saintly king Janaka.

It is obvious that Sri Ramakrishna had attained to such an exalted state of spiritual development that every form of worship prescribed by the different religions appeared to him to be a living principle of personal faith. We shall not pause here to enter into the details of the most wonderful disciplines and exercises through which he reached this unique ‘devotional eclecticism.’ Nor shall we dwell upon the volumes of strange and wonderful wisdom that continuously poured from his lips, shedding a ‘flood of marvellous light upon the obscurest passages of the Puranic Shastras and bringing out the fundamental principles of the popular Hindu faith with a philosophical clearness which strangely contrasted with his simple and illiterate life.’ We shall content ourselves with merely quoting the words of one witness who is by no means partial—“A living evidence of the depth and sweetness of Hindu religion is this good and holy man. He has wholly controlled his flesh. It is full of soul, full of the reality of religion, full of joy, full of blessed purity. \* \* He has no other thought, no other occupation, no other relation, no other friend in his humble life than his God. That God is more than sufficient for him. His spotless holiness, his deep unspeakable blessedness, his unstudied, endless wisdom, his child-like peacefulness and affection towards all men, his consuming, all-absorbing love for God are his only reward!”

There remains now for us to consider the one great peculiarity of his life which distinguishes him from all other world-teachers, and that is his message of peace and

harmony to the warring and bleeding world, through the realisation of the truth and unity of all religions. The advent of world-teachers is no mere chance occurrence, but comes about at very critical periods for fulfilling a definite purpose. One has only to study the lives of Sri Krishna, Buddha and Christ to be convinced of this truth. As Sri Ramakrishna used to say—"An Avatara is like a Viceroy to the Mighty Ruler of the universe. As when there is any disturbance in some far-off province, the King sends the Viceroy to quell it, so whenever there is any waning of religion in any part of the world God sends His Avatara to guard virtue and foster its growth." It would appear that in the present case the disturbance is not confined to any particular province but has affected His entire kingdom. Perhaps this statement requires further elucidation, and we shall try to explain what we mean.

In the past, there have been very critical and dangerous situations in the history of the world, more or less restricted in intensity and scope, when the moral and spiritual laws of life were neglected and even forgotten, and the resuscitation of Dharma has been effected by Saviours embodying in their lives the principles of adjustment suited to the occasion. But in the present instance the danger is on a colossal scale, threatening to engulf the whole of humanity. For, now material ideas have reached the very acme of glory and power; and man, owing to his increased dependence upon physical environments and ever-expanding opportunities for sense-enjoyment, is reduced to a mere money-making machine and his Divine nature is likely to be forgotten. The rapid progress and the wonderful achievements of science have, as it were, let loose the baser passions, viz. lust, anger, avarice, infatuation, pride and envy of man. As a result we have now the familiar class-wars, caste-wars, race-wars and other forms of conflict, which, if not checked promptly and effectively, will simply end in the destruction of the human race.

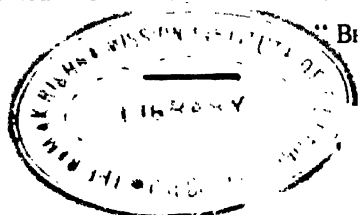
Again, for the first time, all the important parts of

the world have now been brought into touch and made into an organic whole. Common interests due to trade and commerce by land and sea, the improvement in the railways, telegraphs, wireless and radio, and the world-wide postal system, finance, newspapers and other creations of modern science have made the whole world so inter-dependent that no one part can be injured without all others suffering at the same time, nor can one part better its fortune without promoting the prosperity of other parts as well. As Swami Vivekananda pointed out on several occasions—"Whenever there has been a great conquering race, bringing the nations of the world together, making roads and transit possible, immediately India arose and gave her quota of spiritual power to the sum-total of the progress of the world.\* \* \* Now the same opportunity has again come. \* \* \* The world to-day has been linked in such a fashion as has never been done, and immediately, consciously or unconsciously, India rises up and pours forth her gifts of spirituality, and they will rush through these roads till they have reached the very ends of the world."

This puts in a nutshell the real clue to the significance of the advent of Sri Ramakrishna. As has been pointed out in connection with his wonderful realisations, Sri Ramakrishna is the first instance in the recorded history of the world to have proved by actual experience the unity, harmony and truth of all the religions. This is his special message to the world, and through the realisation of this truth in the various departments of life alone can a permanent world-peace be made possible. In recent times, a few high-souled and liberal-minded thinkers in different parts of the world have been urging the need of giving up all hatred, war, conquest and exploitation, and appealing for international tribunals of arbitration, reduction of armaments etc. with a view to inaugurate a federation of humanity or world-brotherhood. In the writings of these persons one meets with arguments based upon industrial, political, social and such other prudential considerations or advantages, as well as on ethical and

spiritual grounds. It must be admitted that if the powerful and prosperous nations of the world were in a mood to act upon any one of these motives, the wished-for end could be easily achieved. But in their intoxication of power and material glory, such appeals fail to make any impression upon them. To many it would appear that neither would the harmony and unity of all religions, however firmly established and demonstrated beyond all possible doubt, succeed in destroying their self-complacent security and gain a more favourable hearing.

In any case, no better basis of unity and peace among mankind can be thought of than the bond of religion. For, it alone touches the deepest depths of the human personality. Even ethical or moral codes based on personal authority have lost their binding force to the modern mind, and now everyone demands more than a human sanction—demands a sanction that is grounded in some eternal principles of truth. Where else can this sanction be found except in the only Infinite Reality which exists in you, in me and in all, in the Self—in the Soul of our souls? You and I are not only brothers, but also one. This oneness is the rationale of all ethics and spirituality. Sri Ramakrishna in his manifold realisations stands as a shining witness to this eternal truth. His life is a living example of renunciation and universal love and toleration which have also been the one theme of India's message to the world. To the eye of faith, the spiritual message, as embodied in the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, has already commenced to bear fruit. The thoughts of such spiritual giants are powerful forces which vibrate through space, penetrating the most adamant walls of opposition and gather volume and strength with time, and will persist till they have eventually converted and transformed the whole human race.



“BHARGAVA.”

## THE LATEST APOSTLES OF ABHAYAM OR FEARLESSNESS.

BY SURENDRA NATH CHAKRAVARTY, M.A.

Coming down to the latest and perhaps the greatest spiritual movement fathered by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the veritable embodiment, as it were, of the best and the highest in the Sanatana Dharma, and expounded by his worthy disciple, the mighty Swami Vivekananda—a movement which when properly understood is expected to lave the world in a glorious splendour and bathe it in a flood of magnificent spirituality—a movement which is expected to shower blessings of peace on earth by introducing a formative synthesis in which co-exist the possibilities of simultaneous development to the highest degree of the two ostensibly contradictory tendencies in human nature, *viz.*, love of criticism and love of pacifism—a movement, again, which truly recognises the force of sincerity in religious faith and admits the possibility of attaining God by sincerely following the particular forms of worship to which men in different climes are born, and at the same time justifies the existence of **जटिला** and **कुटिला** (warring elements in religion) for making God's **लीला** (pleasure of creation) **पुष्ट** (fuller).

What do we find at the bottom of this movement? We find that the truth which is a heritage of the Sanatana Dharma, the truth which the Upanishads, the Geeta, Puranas, Tantras and Samhitas have been loudly proclaiming from time immemorial—a truth the non-recognition and non-observance of which has hurled down India to the lowest depths of abasement, spiritual, mental and physical, from the magnificent height where it had once its seat—we find that this truth once more personifies itself in the body of Sri Ramakrishna whom the Divine Mother, out of Her infinite mercy for the children of India, appears to have sent down in the guise of a poor, child-like and unlettered Brahmin, serving as an ignoble priest

in the temple founded by a Kaivarta, to prove, as it were, to mathematical demonstration, how spiritual courage rises, by its intrinsic force, triumphant over the tremendous odds which an apparently vindictive world of Maya may set against it with a view to crush its aspirations. The Brahmin realised in life himself and was never tired of preaching the immortal truth uttered in the Ashtâvakra Samhita :

मुक्तमिमानी मुक्तो हि बद्धो बन्धाभिमान्यपि ।

किंवदन्तीति सत्येयं या मतिः सा गतिर्भवेत् ॥

—"He is free who thinks himself to be free. He is bound who thinks himself bound. True is the saying that one becomes what one thinks."

Along with many things which the Brahmos borrowed from the Christians, they brought in the doctrine of sin and repentance—a doctrine which is in vogue among the Vaishnavas of Bengal. Not being a historian, it is difficult for the writer to say whether the doctrine of sin is an indigenous growth in Hinduism, or a foreign scion engrafted on the native stock of the Hindu religion. Whatever it may be, the doctrine of sin and repentance which appears to have been denounced by that profound philosopher Spinoza, is very much apt to be misapplied, misunderstood and carried to excess, and instead of furthering the ends for which it was intended, it is liable to produce an effect exactly opposite of the desired end and so injuriously affect the spiritual constitution of the so-called sinner as ultimately to wreck it altogether and render it unfit for any progress. How this pernicious doctrine which does not seem to be germane to the tenets of healthy Hinduism as embodied in the Upanishads, Geeta and Samhitas, crept into it and struck roots there, it is difficult to trace. But its effect on the people seems to be disastrous. It enervates the physical and moral constitution of the mass and gives rise to a set of effeminate puling croakers, continuously harping on their sins. The more you ponder over sins, the more depressed



you grow. It is really a doctrine of fear, indicative of want of faith in the loving nature of God.

Against this demoralising and disheartening doctrine which is fatal to spiritual growth, Sri Ramakrishna opposed the message of Abhayam in his inimitable style. It is difficult to resist the temptation to quote his catching words for which the whole world is irrepayably indebted to the greatest biographer of India, the celebrated M., who keeping himself entirely in the background wrested from unhappy oblivion the immortal sayings of Sri Ramakrishna and brought back to life, as it were, the veritable picture of the world-teacher speaking to his audience, untarnished, as far as possible, by the personal idiosyncrasies of the author.

Says Sri Ramakrishna to the Brahmo Bhaktas—  
 “Bondage is in mind, freedom is also in mind. I am free. Whether I live in the world or in the forest, what can be my bondage? I am the child of God, the son of the King of kings. Who can bind me? If a snake bites you, you will be free from venom if you say with emphasis that there is no venom. So if one repeats, ‘I am not bound, I am free,’ with resolute determination, one becomes so, one actually becomes free.

“Some one gave me a book of the Christians..... It is full of *sins* and *sins*. (To Keshab Ch. Sen). Your Brahmo Samaj also talks of *sin* only. The man who says always, ‘I am bound, I am bound,’ comes to be bound. He who says day and night, ‘I am a sinner, I am a sinner,’ becomes a sinner.

“One ought to have this faith in God—‘What ! I have uttered His name, shall sin still possess me? What can be my sin? What can be my bondage?’

“By uttering God’s name one’s body and mind become purified.

“Why talk of sin and hell only? Say once for all, ‘I shall not repeat the wrong which I have committed,’ and have faith in His name.” Enthused with the love of God, Paramahansa Deva sang.—

"If I die, O Mother, saying 'Durga, Durga', I shall see, O Shankari, how you can do without saving this humble child in the last days."

Are there words in the whole range of religious literature which more emphatically, more eloquently and more explicitly voice the fundamental necessity of Abhayam in the evolution of religious life? The capacity of these ringing words to rouse the dormant energies of a prostrated soul, to rally the wavering, enthuse the low-spirited, strengthen the weak, make the strong stronger and the bold bolder still, is unbounded. Who is there in the world who can say with his hands on his bosom that he never felt a spiritual depression, never fell into the inextricable slough of despond and never entered the cave of despair? Who is there in the world who, in moments of such utter depression when the harpies of disbelief, distrust and spiritual imbecility mercilessly chained the soul, did not feel the need of words such as these to heal up the wounds of scepticism? Sri Ramakrishna's words voice the dictates of Everlasting Yea which say that you are Spirit—**अमृतस्य पुत्राः** (children of Immortality), inhabitants of the Heavenly Mansion, as against the pernicious utterances of Everlasting Nay, which incessantly whisper into your ears—"You are weak, vermins, nothing but clay, fortuitous concourses of atoms, mere baubles made to grimace for a while, refined animals, the summum bonum of whose life is sense-pleasure and acquisition of temporal power."

Paramahansa Deva was the sweet warbler whose dulcet carols preluded the melodious bursts of freedom that fill our specious lives. Swami Vivekananda whose heart bled for his country, was the fittest and most capacious vase to receive the Paramahansa's teaching regarding the freedom of the soul—the necessity of fearlessness in religious life. Swamiji's hauteur seems to repel many. But this is akin to what is called 'Miltonic egotism' which is the offspring of a massiveness of intellect and consciousness of outstanding superiority to the ordinary multitude whose sole function is eating,

sleeping, fear and enjoyment. Pride is an aristocratic virtue which ill-befits to be herded with the base-born qualities of a civil society parading a cringing and hypocritical humility invariably attended with insincere parting of lips and showing of the gums of the teeth—a humility which covers a multitude of hideous sins. It is thousand times better to have the fearless pride of a Vivekananda which rouses than the meek humility of the poltroons which depresses. Admire from the distance what you cannot comprehend, but do not debase yourself by cavilling at the greatness of the great. He is the man to whom the saying of the bard can be truly applied—

“Pride in his heart and defiance in his eyes,  
I see the herd of humankind pass by.”

यो यच्छुद्धः स एव सः—“A man is what he thinks.”

Vivekananda's demeanour was the direct outcome—the reflex of what the man was within. His imperious soul stamped its expression on his countenance and carriage. A king of men was he, and he necessarily moved like a king among them. It was no fault of his that Great God gave him neither the stoop of humility, nor the vulgar and democratic arrogance of a mountebank. A lion can only roar and not squeak, and a nightingale can only sing and not hoot. This man appears to have been commissioned by God to carry the message of aggressive Hinduism to the four corners of the earth, to show to the world the grandeur of the broad-based synthesis of religion impersonated in the child-man Sri Ramakrishna, and above all to awaken race-consciousness among the Hindus and show them that they are not lambs and sheep as they have been hypnotised into thinking themselves to be, but veritable lions fit to roam the earth no sooner than they shake off the spell of hypnotism.

This young Sannyasin roved through the forests of India, travelled in Europe and America, mixed with the high and the low, with the rich and the poor; his restless mind swept across the deepest problems of life; fits of despair and desire to merge in Samadhi crossed and recrossed his mind; but the thought of India and her destiny

appears never to have deserted him. How to bring life into the atrophied limbs of prostrate, befooled and humiliated India, which in the name of religion sanctioned the elevation of hunch-backed servility to the status of a lofty virtue, was, it seems, the constant companion of his thoughts. Swamiji is reported to have said that he would like to be born again and again to raise India from her degraded state. Before the salvation of India he would throw his personal salvation to the winds. He would even believe that it was impossible for him to be saved until the last man was saved.

What was the diagnosis of this Sannyasin of the deep seated malady of India, which he compared to a putrid, festering sore, and what was its cure he discovered in the course of his solitary and public peregrinations through the world? He found that India lacked in virility—her one desideratum was want of manhood—her crying need was courage and self-trust. "Be proud that you are an Indian," the Swamiji thundered. "Be men. Be heroes. Be Gods and help others to become Gods," are the mottoes in which may be crystallised the sum and substance of the Swamiji's life-long teaching. **नायमात्मा बलहीन लभ्यः**—"This Atman cannot be realised by the weak," roared he again and again. "Establish house to house worship of Mahavira," fulminated Vivekananda.

In the course of a conversation in the Belur Math, the late lamented Swami Prajnananda pointed out to the writer the points of close resemblance between the episodes in the life of Swami Vivekananda and Mahavira. Like his protagonist, Swamiji excelled in his love of his Master. Like him he crossed the seas, alone and helpless, to conquer the Europeans and wrest back from them the Seeta of self-confidence which was abducted from India by the Ravana of material civilisation in an unguarded moment when the manhood of India deserted Seeta of self-trust in quest of the golden deer of sensual pleasures which Ravana sent in advance to delude Rama with. Just as Mahavira's source of strength and inspira-

tion was the love of Ramachandra, so Swamiji relied upon his Lord.

The writer had also the good fortune of being present on a rare occasion when Swami Turiyananda (Hari Maharaj) in an exalted moment, when his spirit was fused, as it were, by the galvanic touch of the sweet remembrance of the undefinable beauty of the incident, was telling before a small audience in the Belur Math a soul-thrilling incident which was quite characteristic. On being reminded of his want of resources before the commencement of his memorable journey to the West, Swamiji replied by singing—"I rely upon Rama only." The manner in which this line was uttered was so touching, so simple and so grand that it transcended the power of Hari Maharaj to convey an adequate picture of it in words, and in despair he feelingly remarked to the effect that the scene filled his bosom, but he had no power to unbosom it.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.\*

(BY K. N. DAVE, SUB-JUDGE, NAGPUR, C. P.)

Gentlemen, it is easy, as the Master has said, to utter *sa, ré, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni* (the different notes of the gamut), but it is not so easy to sing, and I sincerely wish the privilege of discoursing upon "Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva and Universal Brotherhood" were conferred upon a far worthier person than my humble self. A gentleman with the fire of faith and devotion burning bright in his soul would have been the fittest person to do justice to such a theme.

Infant Gadadhar, as the Paramahansa was named when he saw the light of this world, was born of a respectable and orthodox Brahmin family of Kamarpukur in the Hooghly District in the year 1836. His parents

\* Notes of a lecture delivered in Nagpur.

Khudiram Chattopadhyaya and Srimati Chandramani Devi were high-souled persons, known for their piety, kindness and devotion to God. There is a saying in Hindi that a promising sapling has smooth, shining leaves, and the child Gadadhar as he grew up developed a peculiar charm and fascination. Even strangers felt irresistibly drawn to him as if he were their own kith and kin. He had a most precocious genius for learning, and though quite unlettered, he would frequently re-enact a religious drama in the open fields or under the trees, with the help of his playmates after coaching each one in his appropriate part. Before he was six or seven years of age, he had gathered most of our Puranic lore and mythology, and even assimilated the abstruse doctrines of the Vedanta philosophy from Puranic recitations and Kirtans. His vivid consciousness of the Sublime and the Beautiful and his deep sympathy with Nature will be apparent from an incident which happened very early to him. While still a boy of eleven or twelve, he was one morning roaming in the fields. The wide expanse of the horizon with the sun in its morning glory, the soft, cool breeze playing upon the bushes and a flight of snow-white cranes on the wing curving their way high up against the deep blue sky so filled the lad with wonder and admiration that in his first experience of a close communion with Nature he fell into an ecstatic swoon.

After he had been invested with the sacred thread, he was taken to the school. But he soon left it in disgust when he found that with all their book-learning and tall talk about high and noble principles, people still strove after power and pelf. He knew that he had come upon a different mission, and the inner urge of his soul was towards learning something else. He yearned to solve the mystery of the world, and this he thought—and no one can say that he thought incorrectly—could not be achieved by the education imparted at the school. He left school, and soon afterwards found himself worshipping the Mother Kali as a priest in the temple at Dakshineshwar, a place near Calcutta.

This proved to be the turning point in his life, for it was here that his orientation towards a pure and saintly life was fixed for ever. It was here that he developed an all-absorbing love for his God the Mother and received his initiation into the inner truths of the Hindu philosophy and religion—chiefly Vedanta and Tantrikism. His progress was simply wonderful. Such was his genius and so strong was his desire to learn that he became an adept in the Yogic practices and mysteries within a few days,—a course which common devotees take years and years to go through. During all this time he continued to make steady progress in spiritual life, culminating in Samadhi. He so disciplined himself that he eventually acquired a complete control over himself and came to regard with absolute indifference all that common people live and die for. The method by which he arrived at this state of perfect freedom is a long story by itself, and I would not detain you with it here. All I would say is that thus disciplined he was all humility and always called himself a servant of the people.

Without the least idea of becoming a Guru except that of realising the great Truth for himself and of helping mankind, he soon found himself surrounded by men and women of all classes, eager to drink at the fountain of spiritual knowledge, and he was but too willing to help and instruct everyone. During his own life-time he changed the course of the life of many an aspirant, and blessed and ennobled them all. To mention only one or two great names: Keshav Chandra Sen sat for years at the feet of the Master and assimilated much of his philosophy of the "New Dispensation" from him; the world-renowned Swami Vivekananda was his principal disciple, and well has the Swami repaid his spiritual debt by holding aloft the banner of Hinduism throughout the world and particularly at the World's Parliament of Religions held in the year 1894 at Chicago in America. Such was the per-fervid spirituality of the Paramahansa and his ideal of service, that in spite of illness he would go on pouring forth his soul in song or rhapsody for the

uplift of the people, and this did not stop even when a very serious form of throat trouble overtook him. The great soul departed from this life in 1886. This, gentlemen, is, in briefest outline, the life-story of Sri Ramakrishna and will, I trust, help you in grasping the spirit of his teaching.

Intellectualists and sceptics to whom Western science was all in all, attempted to explain the apparently strange behaviour of the Paramahansa and particularly his Samadhi as a pathological condition. I am not competent to pronounce an authoritative opinion on the question. But, as it seems to me, these critics forget that, with all its achievements, Western science is still in its infancy, and a proper study of the physiology of the human brain and the psychology of the subconscious has barely begun. Advanced scientists have now given up their orthodox attitude of "thus far and no further," and, with the culmination of physical evolution in the human body, they have come to believe in the continuity of the evolutionary process in the psychic and intellectual powers of man. Who can say that what we call genius in all its forms is but an example of the normal variations in Nature by which she makes for progress and finally decides upon the line of further advance? In her attempts she occasionally creates a Kaiser or a Bismark or men of a different cast who, instead of helping the onward march of humanity, merely retard it if they can. But there can be no doubt that the human race is still struggling along, groping, as it were, in the dark to find a way out towards Light, and the present chaotic condition of the world is a proof of the fact that the race has not yet taken to a definite line of progress which would, in the end, contribute to the maximum of happiness to one and all. To return to the Samadhi of the Paramahansa, it is probably a state of beatitude—of intense enjoyment of the soul when it is overwhelmed with a consciousness of the Infinite, and such a condition, I think, cannot be characterised as a pathological condition.



Gentlemen, I shall not take up your time by a digression upon the time-worn question whether a hero or man of genius is a creature of his environment or whether he creates his own atmosphere. I believe, it will not be disputed that every great soul has a mission to perform. This, at any rate, is the Hindu belief in its religious outlook on the coming of saints and Avatars. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa had no doubt such a mission. He came at a time when educated Bengal drawn by the external glamour of Western civilisation was drifting away from its national moorings. It was he who gave a check to the disruptive tendencies of internal decay and of foreign influences which had begun to eat into the vitals of the nation. His great disciple Swami Vivekananda carried on the same work in a more systematic way. The result was a great revival of national culture and thought in the country. The demonstration of the essential unity of all the great religions of the world by personal spiritual experience was another item of the Paramahansa's mission. Not being satisfied with the theoretical identity of religious truths in the various creeds of the world, he practised for a time the doctrines of each great religion and cult and experienced inwardly the essential unity of purpose common to them all. It is this inwardness of his spiritual experiences which lends a peculiar authority to his teachings. He says—"The light of the gas illumines different localities with different intensities, but the life of the light, viz., the gas, comes from a common reservoir. So the religious teachers of all climes and ages are but as many lamp-posts emitting the light of the Lord Almighty." What a homely illustration, gentlemen, and yet how true! Again—"A truly religious man should think that other religions also are paths leading to Truth. We should always maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions."

At the present moment we particularly need a teaching like this which, if followed, would do away with all the bitter controversies of present day India and cement all the communities in bonds of love everlasting. Hindus

and Brahmos were once preaching in Calcutta their respective religions with great earnestness and zeal. Seeing this, a disciple asked the Paramahansa his opinion about both the parties, and he said—"I see my Mother Divine is getting Her work done through both." Nothing could be more beautiful and sublime than this simple saying of the saint—"I see my Mother Divine is getting Her work done through both." What volumes of meaning does it not contain? It at once furnishes us with a true bond of religious union in the world. If only we grasped the truth of these simple words, it would immediately open out quite a new experience to every one and make us feel, not as followers of conflicting faiths, but as brothers bound upon a common journey and intent upon a common goal—each taking the road he likes best.

Let us see what the Paramahansa has to say of religious rites—"Is it proper to wear the sacred thread? The Paramahansa replies: 'When the knowledge of the Self is obtained, all fetters fall off of themselves. Then there is no distinction of a Brahmin or non-Brahmin, of high or low. In that event the thread as the sign of distinction falls away of itself.' " The moral of the above saying is obvious. Rituals and formalities have only a relative value and ought not to be made much of. The need for them naturally disappears as soon as one realises the Self, which is nothing but an "attainment of a just sense of one's position" in the universe and the realisation that must come with it, *viz.*, there is, truly speaking, no such thing as Brahmin and non-Brahmin, high or low.

Before leaving this aspect of the teaching of the Master, I shall cite a couple of his sayings bearing upon the causes of the ever-recurring dissensions amongst us. He says—"God is in all men, but all men are not in God. That is why they suffer." Says he again—"He alone is the true 'man' who is illumined with the Spiritual Light". This last has reference to one's consciousness of the essential unity of the Creator and the created. But it is only men with this consciousness who

may be said to be in God, for God is certainly in all men. When he assigns ungodliness as the root-cause of our suffering, I understand him to say that with the recognition of the truth that God is in all men, we would cease to quarrel and misunderstand one another, and live in love and amity for ever.

It may be asked, how to arrive at this state of feeling? And the Paramahansa shows the way—"He who has faith has all. He who is wanting in faith is wanting in all." This he illustrates with the everyday experience of what we now understand by the high-sounding name of hypnotism and autosuggestion. The following is by way of an explanation of the above saying—"An Indian faith-healer orders his patient to repeat with conviction that he is not ill—he is not ill. And lo! the patient is cured". We have got to believe with all the fervour of religious faith that all the different communities inhabiting the country are of the same kith and kin, that we are actually living our daily lives in mutual love and respect; and there is not the least doubt that we shall not be long in realising the goal. This also follows directly from his idea of God as the Universal Father or Mother.

A disciple asks, "Why does a Bhakta find such pleasure in addressing the Deity as Mother?" "Because the child is more free with the mother," is the reply. Everyone of us can say from personal experience that not only is a mother's love for her child more transcendental and disinterested than that of the father, but a child also has a far greater expectation of the fulfilment of his heart's desire from a mother than from a father. He can ask for it more insistently of a mother. What mother will not starve herself to feed her child? It is this nearness of the mutual relationship that led the Paramahansa to worship the Spirit in the form of Kali the Mother. It is a bond of the purest and closest affinity and establishes a most perfect and selfless union between the Bhakta and the Object of his adoration. Being the offspring of a common Mother, we have got the best of reasons to avoid all differences and live together

like brothers in our common Indian home or even in the world at large. No better bond of union and mutual trust can be imagined than this—the ideal of a Universal Mother. Humanity is not merely a great brotherhood, but it is a brotherhood, the individual members of which are perfectly equal. Worldly people with a narrow vision of 'mine and thine' see nothing but petty differences of rank and position, but those endowed with an enlarged vision make no such differences and must regard all as equal.

It may be said that in this work-a-day world of ours it is not possible to reconcile these high ideals with one's duty to family and children. We are not left in doubt on the point, however. A homely illustration again brings the truth home to us—"A wet-nurse brings up the child of her master, loving the baby as if it were her own, but knows well that she has no claim upon it. So think ye that you are trustees and guardians of your family and children whose real father is the Lord in Heaven". Says the Paramahansa again—"A boat may stay in water but not water in the boat. So a man may live in the world but the world must not live in him." What a convincing yet simple commentary on the great principle of Nishkama Karma as preached by the Lord Sri Krishna in the Gita! Man is likened to a boat and the world to water. If you want to cross the ocean of life and help others to cross it, let not your soul be filled with the petty temptations and jealousies of the world but steer clear of them.

India, gentlemen, is the land of saints and Avatars and the Indian people a congeries of different races and creeds. But is it so by mere chance? Why of all places on the face of the earth, should India alone be the apparent battle-field for the conflict of different races, religions and cultures? The Dravidians with their hoary civilisation were the first to step in and assimilate with the indigenous population, possessing a palæolithic culture and animistic worship. Next came the Aryans with a higher civilisation and nature-worship which in course of time evolved into Brahmanism, Jainism, Buddhism and

ultimately Hinduism. After a long respite dashed in the virile Mahommedans bringing with them democratic ideals and a clear-cut conception of the unity of the God-head. The latest immigrants are the followers of Zoroaster and Christ. All the great religions have been born in the East. And it seems as if Providence means to work out the salvation of humanity also in the East by realising first the ideal of the brotherhood of nations and then the ideal of the brotherhood of man. Each one of the seven great communities in this country—Hindus, Mussalmans, Jains, Buddhists, Christians, Parsis and Sikhs are like the seven notes of the gamut. Each must progress along its own line, not in bigotry but in mutual helpfulness, and then like the seven perfect notes of music they must all blend together in one divine symphony of universal brotherhood and lead humanity to the goal.

So far we have all been developing—each community with its own culture—on analytical lines. It seems we must for a time travel along our different roads but synthetically, so as to arrive at a type of unique national culture. The first essential condition of universal brotherhood is the formation of individual character, so that each individual member of society must spontaneously promote the welfare of the community as part and parcel of his own happiness. It is for this reason that each individual community in India must attain perfection within itself. Then will the process of synthesis begin, blending the various cultural groups into one common brotherhood, where there will be no conflict of interests, but all will be comrades in the service of humanity. This is a vision of the future—an ideal to be striven for, with all our might and faith.

Universal brotherhood of man has been the dream of all great idealists, and ideals—even those that seem to be impossible of attainment—have a value of their own. The great saints of India, from the seers of the Vedic age to Mahavira, Buddha, Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, Tukaram and Sri Ramakrishna—have all borne the torch of Light and shown the way towards

the Ideal. We have seen what a valuable contribution Sri Ramakrishna has made to it. Let us all acknowledge our unbounded gratitude to him and try to follow the way of Light and hasten the day of realisation.

## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

## CHAPTER XV.

उद्धव उवाच ॥

विधिश्च प्रतिषेधश्च निगमो ह्रीश्वरस्य ते ॥

अवेक्षतेऽरविन्दाक्ष गुणं दोषं च कर्मणाम् ॥ १ ॥

वर्णाश्रमविकल्पं च प्रतिलोमानुलोमजम् ॥

द्रव्यदेशवयःकालान्स्वर्गं नरकमेव च ॥ २ ॥

Uddhava Said :

1—2. O lotus-eyed Lord, injunctions and prohibitions constitute Thy commandment, the Vedas, which adjudge the merits<sup>1</sup> and defects of work, of the various castes and orders of life, of the issues of Anuloma<sup>2</sup> and Pratiloma marriages, of substance, place, age and time and of heaven and hell.

[The first five verses attempt a *prima facie* refutation of what has been said in the last verse of the preceding chapter, viz., that one should make no distinction between the merits and defects of work.

<sup>1</sup> *Merits &c.*—Certain kinds of work are higher and are to be preferred to other kinds which are lower. Similarly with the other terms that follow. The phrase 'merits and defects' is to be repeated with each.

<sup>2</sup> *Anuloma &c.*—An Anuloma marriage is one in which the husband belongs to a higher caste and the wife to a lower caste. *Pratiloma* is the reverse of it.]

गुणदोषमिदा दृष्टिमन्तरेण वचस्तव ॥

निःश्रेयसं कथं नृणां निषेधविधिलक्षणम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. How can Thy utterances<sup>1</sup> consisting of injunctions and prohibitions conduce to the liberation of men

without<sup>2</sup> observing the distinction between merits and defects?

[1 *Utterances*—the Vedas.

2 *Without &c.*—For it is by shunning the lower and adhering to the higher courses of action that progress is possible.]

पितृदेवमनुष्याणां वेदश्चक्षुस्तवेभ्वर ॥

श्रेयस्त्वनुपलब्धेऽर्थे साध्यसाधनयोरपि ॥ ४ ॥

4. O Lord, the Vedas uttered by Thee are the highest source of illumination for the manes, the gods and men, regarding things unseen<sup>1</sup> as well as means<sup>2</sup> and ends.

[1 *Unseen*—Such as liberation, and heaven, &c.

2 *Means &c.*—which is which.]

गुणदोषभिदादृष्टिर्निगमात्ते न हि स्वतः ॥

निगमेनापवादश्च भिदाया इति ह भ्रमः ॥ ५ ॥

5. The distinction between merits and defects is to be observed through Thy commandment, the Vedas, and not according to the promptings of nature. Here is again Thy commandment<sup>1</sup> which refutes the idea of distinction. This is exceedingly puzzling.<sup>2</sup>

[1 *Commandment*—uttered at the end of the preceding chapter.

2 *Puzzling*—so kindly enlighten me on the point.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

योगास्त्रयो मया प्रोक्ता नृणां श्रेयोविधित्सया ॥

ज्ञानं कर्म च भक्तिश्च नोपायोऽन्योऽस्ति कुत्रचित् ॥ ६ ॥

The Lord said :

6. With a view to effect the liberation of men I have inculcated<sup>1</sup> three Yogas or methods, viz., those of Knowledge, Work and Devotion. There is no other<sup>2</sup> means anywhere.

[He first deals with the three Yogas in order to show that the apparent contradiction is to be solved by a reference to the qualification of the aspirant. During the period of striving there is all that distinction, but after realisation there is none.

<sup>1</sup> *Inculcated*—in the sections dealing with Brahman, ritual and the gods respectively.

<sup>2</sup> *No other &c.*—Such as work done with a selfish motive.]

निर्विण्णानां ज्ञानयोगो न्यासिनामिह कर्मसु ॥

तेष्वनिर्विण्णचित्तानां कर्मयोगस्तु कामिनाम् ॥ ७ ॥

यद्वृच्छया मत्कथादौ जातश्रद्धस्तु यः पुमान् ॥

न निर्विण्णो नातिसक्तो भक्तियोगोऽस्य सिद्धिदः ॥ ८ ॥

7—8. Of these the path of Knowledge is for those who have got disgusted with work<sup>1</sup> and have renounced it ; for those who have not been disgusted with it and desire its fruits, there is the path of Work ; but, for the man who somehow<sup>2</sup> has got a veneration for tales about Me and such other things, and who is neither disgusted with nor grossly attached to work, the path of Devotion<sup>3</sup> is successful.

[<sup>1</sup> *Work*—Knowing it is fraught with evil.

<sup>2</sup> *Somehow*—by a rare stroke of good fortune.

<sup>3</sup> *Devotion*—So this is intermediate between the other two.]

तावत्कर्माणि कुर्वीत न निर्विद्येत यावता ॥

मत्कथाश्रवणादौ वा श्रद्धा यावन्न जायते ॥ ९ ॥

9. One should perform work<sup>1</sup> until one has got disgusted<sup>2</sup> with it, or until one has developed a veneration<sup>3</sup> for listening to tales about Me and that kind of thing.

[Verses 9—17 treat of Karma-Yoga as being the first step.

<sup>1</sup> *Work*—obligatory and occasional.

<sup>2</sup> *Disgusted &c.*—Then he is qualified for Jnana-Yoga.

<sup>3</sup> *Veneration &c.*—Then he can take up Bhakti-Yoga.]

स्वधर्मस्थो यजन्यज्ञै र्नाशीः काम उद्धव ॥

न याति स्वर्गनरकौ यद्यन्यन्न समाचरेत् ॥ १० ॥

10. O Uddhava, a man discharging his own duties and performing sacrifices without any desire for results, goes neither to heaven<sup>1</sup> nor to hell,<sup>2</sup> unless he practises evil.

[Verses 10 and 11 show how the Karma-Yogin can rise to the level of a Jnana-Yogin or Bhakti-Yogin.

<sup>1</sup> *Heaven*—because he does not want it.

<sup>2</sup> *Hell*—because he has been doing his duties and avoiding evil.]



अस्मिँल्लोके वर्तमानः स्वधर्मणोऽनघः शुचिः ॥

ज्ञानं विशुद्धमाप्नोति मद्भक्तिं वा यदृच्छया ॥ ११ ॥

11. Such a man, becoming sinless and pure, attains to pure knowledge, or perchance devotion to Me,—remaining in this very world.

स्वर्गिणोऽप्येतमिच्छन्ति लोकं निरयिणस्तथा ॥

साधकं ज्ञानभक्तिभ्यामुभयं तदसाधकम् ॥ १२ ॥

12. Even the dwellers of heaven as well as of hell desire this world, which is conducive to knowledge, and devotion. But the other two<sup>2</sup> do not serve this purpose.

[The human body is praised in verses 12—17.

<sup>1</sup> *Knowledge &c.*—The fifth case in the text stands for the sixth case.

<sup>2</sup> *Other two*—Heaven and hell. The former having too much of pleasure and the latter too much of pain, seldom incline the mind to higher things.]

(To be continued.)

## THE NINETIETH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

BELUR.

The ninetieth birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with great eclat and due solemnity at the Belur Math—the head-quarters of the Ramakrishna Order. The Tithi which fell on Tuesday, the 24th February, 1925. was observed with special worship and other ceremonies, lasting almost throughout the day and night. Hundreds of devotees attended the celebration and partook of Prasad. Towards the end of night a Homa was performed, and three young men were given the vows of Brahmacharya, and three Brahmacharins were initiated into Sannyas by the venerable President of the Order.

The public celebration took place on Sunday, the 1st March and was a grand success. The whole Math

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA 185

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wore a gala appearance. Special steamer services were arranged for the convenience of visitors. As the day advanced, there was an immense gathering of men and women of different stations of life, crowding the Math premises almost to suffocation. It was indeed a sight to see.

A life-size oil-painting of Sri Ramakrishna was placed in a pandal, specially decorated, and hundreds of devotees gathered there to offer worship. The well-known Kali-Kirtan party of Andul and the famous concert party of Prof. Dakshinaranjan Sen, among others, entertained the assembled people with their performances. Over 12,000 people, were fed, batch after batch. The distribution of Prasad was a special feature of the day. In the evening there was a beautiful display of fire-works, kindly presented by their manufacturer, which was enjoyed by all.

### DACCA.

The birthday was celebrated with conspicuous success at the Ramakrishna Math, Dacca, on Sunday, the 1st March.

In a pandal specially erected for the occasion, a big portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was placed, and the figure had a halo of different colours depicting the symbols of the principal religions of the world. There were other portraits also.

From early morning till 4 p.m., Arati, Bhajan, Kirtan, etc., continued one after the other. The whole Math compound was packed with visitors who were served with Prasad. The interest of the ceremony was enhanced this year by the presence of Swamis Nirmalananda and Subodhananda, two senior Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order.

The most interesting function of the day was the miniature parliament of religions, which began its proceedings in the afternoon. It was a representative gathering, consisting of people of various shades of opinion, of light and leading. The speakers on different religions

sat round the Presidential chair, and the work of the meeting began with a religious song. After the reading out of the report of the Ramakrishna Mission at Dacca, Dr. Hartog, the Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University, delivered his interesting speech on Judaism which he himself professes. Among others, he pointed out that the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are in the main analogous to the religion of the Jews, specially their tolerance. Then Sj. Haridas Bhattacharya, Reader of Philosophy, Dacca University, spoke on Vedantism, specially dealing among others with its Universality and synthetic unity. He concluded his lecture by making a feeling reference to the many works of service done by the Mission which are entirely in keeping with the spirit of Vedanta. Sj. Radha Govinda Basak, Professor of Sanskrit, Dacca University, stood up next and read a learned paper on Buddhism, followed by Sj. Radha Benode Goswami Bhagabatrata of Santipur who spoke on Vaishnavism, pointing out its spirit of toleration and harmony and other striking features. Then Rev. Nagendranath Roy of the Baptist Mission delivered a lecture on Christianity. At the very outset he paid a glowing tribute to the sacred memory of Sri Ramakrishna who, he said, preached love and service to humanity as Christianity does. In conclusion, he made a fervent appeal to the audience to do away with all differences, religious or otherwise, so that there might be peace in the world. Next stood up Mohammed Sahidullah, Professor of Bengali, Dacca University and he spoke on Islam dwelling at length on the life and teachings of the Prophet. In the end, the President Dr. Romesh Chandra Majumdar of the Dacca University, in a neat little speech pointed out the utility of such a representative assembly. It was, he said, the most fitting manner of celebrating the birthday of one like Sri Ramakrishna who was a living embodiment of religious toleration and harmony. After the Presidential speech, the great meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the assembled gentlemen and ladies and the chairman.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA 187

### PATNA.

The birthday was celebrated with becoming grandeur under the auspices of the Bengali community of Gardanibag, Patna. In the evening of 7th March a procession attended with music was taken round the principal streets of the locality. In the morning of the 8th Swami Jnaneswarananda at the head of his youthful choir rendered a charming course of devotional songs. At noon 500 children were fed as well as 500 Poor Narayanas. At 5 p.m. a public meeting was held in the Gait Public Library Hall, with Babu Rajendra Prasad in the chair. Swamis Avyaktananda and Nikhilananda delivered powerful speeches in Bengali and English respectively. Pandit Balgopal Malaviya and a Bengali gentleman were also among the speakers. The President's Hindi address was a highly impressive one. The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the chair by Babu Mathuranath Sinha, Vakil. After this there was a Kirtan.

### BENARES.

The celebration came off successfully at the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Luxa, Benares. The usual ceremonies of the Tithi Puja were gone through on 24th February. On the 1st March, 250 Sadhus were entertained. In the afternoon a largely attended meeting was held, presided over by Principal Sanjiv Rao of the Queen's College, who made a short but impressive opening speech. Prof. Jnanchand and Swami Nikhilananda spoke in English on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Avyaktananda spoke in Bengali and Swami Kevalananda in Hindi. After the lectures a series of beautiful devotional songs were sung, under the lead of Swami Jnaneswarananda of Patna, which thrilled the audience.

### KANKHAL.

The birthday was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Hardwar. The Tithi Puja was performed with appropriate ceremonies. The public celebration came off on 1st March. A big portrait

of Sri Ramakrishna was tastefully decorated. After the Ramanam Kirtan at 12 in the noon a meeting was held and speeches were delivered. Swami Adwaitananda spoke in Hindi about the universality and tolerance of Sri Ramakrishna's message. After him a few other Swamis also spoke about the different aspects of Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings. The meeting over, more than two hundred Sadhus of Kankhal and Hardwar were fed. In the evening there were special Arati and Bhajan.

#### CUDDAPAH.

Under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Samaj, Cuddapah (S. India), the birthday was celebrated on the 15th March. In the morning there were Bhajans in the Samaj premises, and Pujas were offered at the local temples. In the noon about 700 poor Narayanas were fed. In the evening a public meeting was held under the presidency of Mr. N. Kuppu Swamiah Garu, B.A., of Telugu literary fame. The President of the Samaj briefly described the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciple Swami Vivekananda. Rai Saheb G. Sankar Rao Garu delivered an interesting lecture on "Saints and their Usefulness." With a short speech from the chair the meeting came to a close at 8-30 p.m.

### NEWS AND NOTES.

#### IS ASTROLOGY SCIENTIFIC?

The attempts to pierce into the mystery of the future or to read into the book of fate has always claimed many votaries in all parts of the world. In India, even at the present day, belief in foretelling of all kinds, astrology in special, is very wide-spread. Consequently a large number of people, with little or no qualifications, are able to carry on a flourishing trade. Instances in which the predictions of these persons are hopelessly inaccurate, are by no means uncommon. It is very natural that the astrologer should take shelter behind the probable error in the recording of the actual time of birth etc. In most

cases, this explanation is quite sufficient to give complete satisfaction to the deluded public, and even when the falsified predictions could not be accounted for in this way, the disappointed rarely, if ever, doubt the competency of the science of astrology itself. It is always maintained that if one is fully versed in the science and if the time of birth etc., also could be accurately ascertained, it is possible to predict the entire future course of the life of a person.

In a recent issue of the Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society of Bangalore, the Dewan Bahadur L. D. Swamikannu Pillai has contributed an interesting paper in the course of which he examines how long astrology has been in this country, with what credentials it came, and what credentials, if any, it has since acquired in the course of its development on the Indian soil. In his opinion, neither in the Vedas nor in the Brahmanas, neither in the Upanishads nor in Panini, is there any reference to planetary astrology. Between the 5th century B. C. and the 5th century A. D., he holds, there is little or no evidence for astrology, and that much of the astrology that we have now is Ptolemaic, brought to India through the writings of Paulus Alexandrinus and Firmicus Maternus in the third or fourth century A. D. His view on horoscope is that it is a mere record of time, that you cannot say anything regarding the life by merely looking at a horoscope, and that astrology cannot any longer be ranked as a science but must be consigned to the limbo of obsolete beliefs.

We have not studied the subject to say whether it has any scientific basis or not, but we are afraid the arguments of the learned writer advanced in this paper might appear not quite conclusive. We have been told of cases where the exact date and hour of a man's death have been foretold years before and the prediction coming true. Also we are not sure whether the law of probability alone could sufficiently explain all such cases. Nevertheless, we can readily agree with the writer in his view regarding the many false pretensions of the astrol-

ogers as a class, and the questionable methods and tricks which quite a majority of them resort to. In some instances, as is pointed out by the writer, the predictions, no doubt, do some harm, nor could the weakening of the will resulting from too much reliance upon astrological foretellings, Kavachas, Shantis for favours from planets etc., rather than upon one's own honest and manly endeavour, be too strongly condemned. One has only to turn to the pages of modern newspapers and periodicals which are so full of advertisements on these and other allied matters to be convinced how wide-spread is this evil. We hope this subject will receive the attention of all competent critics, and the question as to how far astrology has a scientific basis, if any, will be settled once for all.

#### EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENTS.

It will be no exaggeration to say that till the beginning of this century, most of the educational ideals and methods have rarely treated the child as an end in itself. In other words, educational systems were shaped and developed more in the interests of the State, Church, the nation and the parents, but never has it been suspected that the child has a soul of its own with distinct ends and interests. With the discovery of the child-psychology and the increasing knowledge resulting from the researches into this hitherto unknown region, many new educational experiments have been undertaken in some of the most progressive countries of the West. Everyone is already familiar with the achievements of Dr. Montessori which have more or less revolutionised the science of pedagogy.

Emma Goldman describes, in an article in the *Modern Review*, some of the recent educational experiments in Germany. The outside world, especially during the time of the last Great War, was made familiar with the fact that the 'Prussian militarism' was but a reflection of the educational system then prevalent in the country. It must be gratifying to learn that a healthy change in

the spirit of education has already begun. According to this writer, there are two distinct tendencies, the Decisive School Reform movement and the Experimental School movement. The former aims at enlarging the scope of education by various reforms along modern lines, while remaining within the folds of the old system. Although the reformers of this class are severely handicapped by the incubus of school authorities, we are told their efforts are slowly producing a young generation which will ill-fit into the 'straight-jacket of Prussianism.' The experimental schools, on the other hand, have created a new field, free from the obstacles and traditions of the past regime. We learn that almost every large city in Germany now has such new schools. The guiding principle of these schools is the recognition of the inner life of the child and the development of its latent powers. In the words of an organ of the new school—"Not the traditional methods or dead routine within the class-room will prepare the child for its place and work in society, but life itself,—life, with its varied and pulsating events and interests." The rôle of the teacher is to be the friend, counsellor and comrade instead of the dreaded judge and jailer. Not only a good deal of freedom and initiative is allowed to the children while in the class-room, they are also taken on long trips through the country, through forests, fields and across mountains and valleys. The effects of this outdoor life are described thus—"It develops healthy bodies, liveness of movement and independence. It cultivates the power of orientation and absorption, and increases the eagerness of the children to learn more of the rudiments of knowledge picked up during the tramp. Back in the school, they begin feverishly to classify, elaborate, to deepen the information thus gained."

It is claimed for this experiment that mutual helpfulness and a spirit of co-operation in the daily life and work of the school is fostered, beginning with the lowest grade. Another interesting feature is the close co-operation of the parents in their work—thus making the school



a true and vital community centre. By the abolition of the old-fashioned discipline maintained by the drill-sergeant methods, and relying upon the good nature and the sense of responsibility of the boys and girls, self-discipline is the result, and coercion and punishment are no longer needed. It is a significant sign of the times that even in Germany such radical changes in educational methods are undertaken, and as the writer expresses, it is surely worth knowing and watching the attempt to turn the 'former barrack, torture-chamber and grinding mill, the cradle of bureaucracy and militarism,' into a play-house and work-shop for the free development of a new generation.

Whatever element of truth there might be in the expression 'the unchanging East' so far as other departments of life are concerned, it will be difficult to deny its applicability in the realm of education in India. In our schools, not only the school-work has no serious contact with life, but even the so-called play of the children is so dull and stereotyped. The teachers rarely get an opportunity to learn and understand the psychology of the child and its reactions, and their entire responsibility ends with stuffing the child with 'educational twaddle' according to a standard prescribed by the authorities. The want of freedom, both to teachers and pupils, cannot but end in moral degradation. The following observations of Mr. Bertrand Russell deserve the careful consideration of all interested in the cause of education—"Regimentation is the source of the evil. Education authorities do not look on children, as religion is supposed to do, as human beings with souls to be saved. They look upon them as material for grandiose social schemes, future 'hands' in factories, or 'bayonets' in war, or what not. No man is fit to educate unless he feels each pupil an end in himself, with his own rights and his own personality, not merely a piece in a jig-jog puzzle or a soldier in a regiment or a citizen in a State. Reverence for human personality is the beginning of wisdom in every social question, but above all in education."

# Prabuddha Bharata

उचिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।  
*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

*7th December, 1920.*

Swami Turiyananda was talking about a young man, K—, who had joined the Order, but left it soon after. The Head of the Centre where K— had been sent, was there. Addressing him the Swami said—"The boy has gone after all ! You could not keep him ! You ought to have shown him sufficient love and sympathy. In that case, he would not have gone."

*8th December.*

In the morning some members of the Order gathered about the Swami, and the talk drifted on to Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) and his message to the country.

The Swami observed—"As Swamiji would say, 'Religion is the very life of India. Even now it is so. What has India been doing all this time if not producing saints ? India will have to preach religion throughout the whole world.' The words of Swamiji cannot but come

true. India will surely rise again. Swamiji once remarked: 'This time I have left nothing unsaid.' Yes, he has said everything, and his ideas are now being worked out. Mahatma Gandhi is simply one of those channels through which Swamiji's mission is being fulfilled. The introduction of selfless service in the country made by Swamiji is a wonderful thing. I believe India will rise inevitably. If we have not the good fortune to see that in our life-time, it will come to pass later on. There has already been a good beginning. But for India's revival, the advent of personalities like Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji becomes meaningless. Swamiji prophesied many times the future glorious mission of India in unmistakable terms, and his prophecy cannot prove false."

In the afternoon, a small audience gathered in the Swami's room, and there was the usual Bhâgavat class. The class being over the Swami said—"There are three kinds of sins—sins of deed, word and thought." He quoted Manu in support and continued—"As consequences of these sins, men get to the inanimate state, come to this earth as birds and beasts, and are born as wretched creatures in the lowest strata of human society, respectively."

He said again—"It is in the human body that the gates to emancipation open. So every man should be on his guard and make a good use of his life. Enjoyment that one is after is possible in other bodies also, but emancipation is not.

"Attachment to the body is the last and strongest bondage of a creature." And the Swami cited the intense parental affection of monkeys and showed that even they, as all other animals, forget everything about their young ones when their own life is at stake. Then he narrated stories how some of the Mohammedan rulers would sometimes test the parental love of the monkeys by setting fire to the forests where they lived, and how he himself also used to tease the monkeys at Brindavan by taking hold of their young ones.

*20th December, Morning.*

In connection with spiritual discipline, the Swami observed—"By silent and continued prayer and meditation one should create in the mind a subconscious current, and it will go on working at all times—even in sleep. In that case, it is not that one will not have any dream, but that the current thus created will be supreme, working imperceptibly within. During this Sadhana one should not mix with too many persons and engage in useless talk."

Then the Swami narrated the incident how Swamiji had had a mighty fun with Swami Premananda by saying—"You to have a brain! I doubt whether you have got even an ounce of it!" And he also narrated how Swami Premananda had replied saying—"I have what I deserve, brother. Where shall I get tons of it?"

"Next when the question of heart came Swamiji gave a humorous retort to Swami Premananda thus—'And is it a heart you have got! It is simply an apology for it—a palpitating organ!'" said Swami Turiyananda, and the conversation dropped for that day.

*(To be continued.)*

### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Though Buddhism was born in India, it is all but dead now in its very birthplace. Statements more or less to this effect could be met with in the writings of many on Buddhism. It is worth while to examine closely into the several implications of such statements and find out how far they could be accepted as true. In the first place, it might merely mean that the number of persons professing the faith of Buddha is but very very small. Secondly, it might mean that Buddhism has lost its original vitality and is, at the present day, a mere spent up force. Thirdly, it might be interpreted that Buddhism was one of the many religions contending for mastery

over the people of India, but that it has been conquered and finally expelled by its rival, Hinduism. As one or other of these suppositions is implied by various writers, we shall consider each of them in order.



Regarding the statement that there are but a handful of open adherents of Buddhism, it might be readily admitted that, judged merely from the census figures, it would appear to be based on valid grounds. But this, by no means, is a factor militating against the influence of Buddhism. As an earnest follower of Buddhism, Mr. C. Jinarâjadâsa has pointed out in his writings that practically every man who accepts the teachings of science, whether he is Hindu or Christian, Zoroastrian or Mussulman, cannot help being in one part of his mind a Buddhist. He further holds that true Buddhism is not something stored in sacred books, but a universal teaching disseminated all over the world where the laws of nature are in operation, and that we have the interesting psychological fact that there are many Buddhists by practice who are not so by name, all over the world. Whether this interpretation will be accepted as true and satisfactory we need not stop to examine. Whatever be the case, it is a well-known fact that all sections of Hindus, whether orthodox or not, have this element in common, *viz.*, that they all accept and worship the Lord Buddha as one of the greatest incarnations.



Regarding the second implication, *viz.*, that it is a spent up force, actual facts go to prove that the contrary is the case. More than twenty-five centuries after the advent of Buddha, one meets with the remarkable fact that the awakening and activity in connection with the religion and culture of Buddhism are phenomenal. Everyone is familiar with the work of the Pali Text Society founded by Prof. Rhys Davids in 1881, which has so far published more than seventy volumes of texts and transla-

tions. The Sacred Books of the East Series founded by the late Max Müller, the Sacred Books of the Buddhists Series, the Harvard Oriental Series and the German Pali Society have all published and are still publishing many more volumes on Buddhistic literature. Mrs. Rhys Davids points out that in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Japan, and Tibet, there are still clear indications of the influence of Buddhism as testified by these forms of activity :—(1) the printing of the canonical and other Pali classical works in the national script, (2) the inclusion of these and other printed books in the monastic manuscript libraries, (3) the increase of Buddhist colleges, (4) the establishment of foreign missions, and (5) the circulation of periodical propagandist literature in the East and the West.



Even in countries which have few adherents of Buddhism in the strict sense of the term there are unmistakable signs of its awakening and silent progress. In India, the establishment of Buddhistic Societies in several parts of the country, the movement to found a Buddhist University at the historical site of Sarnath, and the birthday celebrations of Buddha in many parts of India, year after year, are but a few of the instances in point. In the countries of the West, the institution of Societies for the study of Buddhism is steadily increasing. The recent attempts for the establishment of Head Quarters for the International Buddhist Union and for the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland are another sign pointing to the revival of Buddhism in foreign lands. In the face of the opening up of so many new avenues, literary, educational, religious, political and geographical, one should be more than obtuse to doubt the vitality and strength of Buddhism.

Coming to the third of the implications that we started with, it would be best to consider some of the causes that are usually suggested for the disappearance

of Buddhism from India, and we shall single out here mainly those adduced by Mrs. Rhys Davids, one of the most learned and sympathetic critics of Buddhism. After referring to the offshoots from the parent trunk or the teaching of the Pali Canon, such as the divergent doctrines and sects comprehensively known as the Mahayanist Buddhism, and the farthest removed cult of the Lamaism of Thibet, she writes thus—"It can hardly be reasonably doubted, in the absence of any historical testimony, that this great and growing division in Indian Buddhism as a religious institution must have greatly aided the hostile advance of Brahminism during the early centuries of the Christian era."

Another reason alleged is that the first converts of Buddhism were drawn largely from the noble or warrior class (the Kshatriyas), and that the majority of them were unfit to appreciate the intellectual and ethical standpoints of the new doctrine. In support of this statement, Mrs. Rhys Davids quotes from the Majjhima-Nikâya, iii, 129, the following saying of the Buddha—"Whence should Jayasena, born and bred in the pursuit of worldly and sensuous desires, know and see and realise that which can only be known and seen and realised by coming out of it all?" Another reason is the assumption by rulers of States of the headship over the reformed churches. Although this fact brought with it a great advance in organisation, discipline and propaganda, it is urged that this was met by a corresponding consolidation of Brahminic tradition and influence. This, in practice, meant investing with ceremonial dignity and sacramental sanction all the religious rituals spreading over all the vital features of physical and social life ; and Buddhism, in contrast, appeared in an unfavourable light, inasmuch as, it ignored to recognise and enhance the ordinary life of man. Still another reason is that Indian Buddhism, in the philosophic aberration of its degeneracy, went off to a side-track, viz., the question of the reality of the external

world. That in over-emphasising the negation of the external world, according to Dr. Walleser, it played up to the absolutist position of the Vedanta and the consequent victory was won by the Hindu intellect and logic.

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Whatever element of truth might be conceded to the foregoing statements, for our own part, it appears that the use of all such expressions as 'rivals', 'fight', 'conquest' and 'expulsion' with reference to the relation between Buddhism and Hinduism is neither happy nor fully warranted by facts. As will be evident from the sequel, Buddhism was but a mere reformation movement at one of the decadent stages of Hinduism, and that when the latter underwent a corresponding transformation, Buddhism had no special mission left to fulfil in India. Hence its outward disappearance as a separate religion from India and its continuance in other lands. This truth is forcibly, but in a language not quite happy, expressed by Edmund Hardy thus—"Buddhism wasted away after rival sects had appropriated everything from it that they could make any use of."

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There now remains for us to consider the question how far Buddhism, whether as a religion or philosophy, had any new elements, if any, and how these affected the subsequent evolution of Hinduism. We shall first of all seek the testimony of experts who have made patient researches in the ancient and medieval arts and architecture of India and then supplement the same by a comparative study of the two philosophies. Mr. E. B. Havell, the well-known author of many works on Indian arts—sculpture, painting, architecture etc., who was led into a comparative study of the Indo-Aryan institutions at different epochs, writes thus on the philosophy of Buddhism, in the course of his observations on the life of the villages of ancient India—"The philosophy of the Vedas proclaimed the highest ideal of self-government,



and Aryan philosophy was not an abstract speculative theory, but a practical formula of life. The teaching of Buddha, though it disputed the divine authority which the orthodox attributed to the Vedas, only gave to this formula a different interpretation and a wider application. It was a protest against sacrificial rites and the debasing practice of physical self-torture, through which certain Brahminical sects sought to acquire spiritual wisdom and to inculcate habits of self-control ; but it was in no way opposed to the esoteric teaching of Aryan philosophy. On the contrary, it laid the foundations of the latter on a wider footing and opened its doors to the whole world, instead of reserving it as the exclusive property of the Aryan race."



Regarding Ashoka's religious propaganda, he thinks it was only a policy of peaceful penetration in conformity with the spirit of Aryan philosophy, which proclaimed Truth to be a temple open on all sides to devout worshippers who might choose to approach. Whatever Buddhism might have been as a school of philosophic speculation, in the opinion of Mr. Havell, Indian art of Ashoka's time shows that as a popular religion it was a synthesis of contemporary Hinduism, as complete for the age to which it belonged as medieval Hinduism was for its own time. In the course of his remarks on the Stupa, he points out that the three bars of the rail meant the three positions of the sun, only the Buddhists call them Buddha, Sangha and Dharma instead of Brahmâ, Vishnu and Shiva, according to the orthodox Brahminic formula. The four bars, to the Brahmana according to him, meant the four Vedas, while the Buddhists explained them as the four events in the life of the Blessed One—the nativity, the enlightenment, the first sermon at Benares and his death or Parinirvâna. The lotus flowers, the Pradakshina, the dome, the reliquary, the umbrella over it etc., might be similarly interpreted. After establishing the correspondence between the Vedic and the

Buddhistic arts, in a number of interesting chapters, he concludes that the inspiration of Buddha would hardly have touched the imagination of all classes so deeply had his teaching cut across the most cherished religious convictions of India.



Among the causes that led to the spiritual and intellectual degradation of India Mr. Havell holds as prominent the fact of the culture being too long confined within itself and the deprivation of the stimulant of new ideas. It not only favoured the growth of a corrupt priestly caste but also brought about the decadence of monasticism, and philosophy as a result lost touch with realities and stultified itself with hair-splitting dialectics. All this applies with equal force to Buddhism as well as Hinduism. "As a religion, Buddhism," he observes, "had become infected with the prevailing sacerdotal vices against which the original teaching of Sâkya Muni was a protest. His ethical doctrines had long since become the common property of Hinduism, and the Buddha himself was acknowledged as one of the ten Incarnations of Vishnu ; but as a sect Buddhism was fast declining in the land of its birth, although in China and the Far East it was gaining many adherents."



The foregoing observations would give the readers sufficient data to prove the main identity of the teachings of Buddha with the ideas current in his own day. Here we shall content ourselves with comparing but a few cardinal notions of each system. The supreme goal of Buddhism is Nirvana, which is usually defined as an extinction not into nothingness but only an extinction of the threefold bondage—the lust of the flesh, the craving for life, and pride. When the inward fires of lust, hatred and illusion are extinguished once and for ever, man is said to have entered the Nirvana, whether here or hereafter. Compare with this one of

the statements of the supreme goal as given in Kathopanishad—"When all the desires that dwell in the heart are destroyed, then the mortal becomes Immortal and attains Brahman even here. When all the knots of the heart (ignorance and its offsprings like egotism, pride, passion etc.) are rent asunder, the mortal conquers death even in this body. So far is the instruction of all Vedanta."

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Most of the teachings of Buddhism are summed up in what is known as, 'the Four Great Truths' 'the Noble Eightfold Path,' 'the Four Efforts,' 'the Ten Meritorious Acts' and 'the Five Meditations,' and there is a striking resemblance of these with the Sâdhana-chatushtaya of the Vedanta—discrimination between the Eternal and the non-eternal, renunciation of all enjoyments here and hereafter, the six virtues of Shama, Dama etc., and the hankering for emancipation. We think these will be enough to convince the readers that the entire background of Buddhism is that of Hinduism, and the religious reformation which Gautama Buddha stands for was not novel to the men of his own day. Nor did he say anything to suggest that he was making a fundamental departure in religion. He accepted all that was true in the beliefs of his time, but he enabled his followers to see the same truths from a new perspective.

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We shall here dispose of the oft-repeated objection against Buddhism as well as Hinduism in general, that their teaching of the impermanence of this world and over-emphasis on renunciation are responsible for the various forms of national weakness. If these religions taught the impermanence of this world, they, at the same time, emphasised the eternal nature of religion. To an impartial observer, whatever is valuable in our arts, paintings, music, sculpture, architecture, literature, and even in science and philosophy, owes everything to

the influence of religion. And if the noble principles upheld by the religions were rightly comprehended and faithfully followed, there would have been no amassing of personal property with the sweat of the poor and down-trodden, and no aggrandisement of power, political or national, no cruelty to the helpless, no murders, no slaughter of dumb creatures to satisfy the insatiable appetites of man ; and finally no wars either of classes or of castes would have disfigured the earth as has been the case up to now. Especially at the present day, the commanding and the loving personality of Buddha who is a shining light to weary humanity groping in darkness, who has lifted the veil of ignorance for those that struggle for freedom and happiness and whose whole life is a bright and glorious commentary on the teachings of the Upanishads, comes as a solace to all hearts laden with sorrow and despair. Let our humble salutations go to the holy feet of the thrice Blessed Lord.

## ÆSTHETICISM AND ETHICISM.

BY PRINCIPAL KAMAKHYANATH MITRA, M.A.

Swami Vivekananda, the spiritual giant, had beneath his warlike exterior a soul keenly alive to the beauties of nature and art. Not many poems have come from his pen, but the few he has written are worth their weight in gold. Posterity will not willingly let them die. We read these and feel that it is deep that is calling into deep. We read these and hear a voice whose sound is like the sea, and so exquisite was his musical skill that it 'would take the prisoned soul and lap it in Elysium.' Yet his attitude towards beauty—what was it? Was his emphasis here? Did he apotheosise nature and art? The answer we find in the following anecdote recorded by Sister Nivedita, a worthy disciple of a worthy master. During his second voyage to the West in company with

the Sister, the Swami was seen on a certain night lost in contemplation while watching the moon-lit, tropical sea. As the Sister approached, his reverie vanished, and he dropped the remark: "If such is the beauty of Maya, then just fancy what the beauty of Brahman must be!" The remark is characteristic of the man and reveals to us his inmost soul.

रसो वै सः.—"He is Joy itself." Quite true! सर्वं शिवं सुन्दरम्,—"The ultimate Reality is the True, the Good, the Beautiful." No doubt about it! But are we to understand by these that whatever is beautiful must necessarily be good and necessarily true, that it makes no difference to a man whether he starts in life from the love of beauty or begins by seeking goodness and truth? Are we to understand by these that the beautiful can ever be a substitute for the good and can at all be an end in itself? "A thing of beauty" may certainly "be a joy," but is this joy "for ever"? Can it be the *summum bonum* of life? Should supremacy be given to the voice of duty, or attraction of beauty be all in all? What after all is beauty, and is one kind of joy as good as another?

It is a commonplace of philosophy that the logical ideal, the æsthetic ideal and the ethical ideal are essentially the same, but the difficulty arises when the question comes as to the practical application of the doctrine. Is 'love an unerring light and joy its own security?' Wordsworth thinks not. Profound thinkers and critics of art like Ruskin and Tolstoy, artists themselves, share the view. Both of them uphold the moral mission of art, and both of them subordinate the claims of beauty and joy to the paramount claims of duty and religion which mean nothing but renunciation at every step that we take in life.

"I slept and dreamt that life is beauty,  
I woke and found that life is duty."

You may lie enchanted in 'the palace of art,' but a rude awakening is bound to come.

Frederic Harrison, an accomplished scholar, with a

historical sense so very keen, makes the remark : "I find mankind so mysteriously complex, and art so subtle in its sources, that I always incline to caution in connecting the beautiful and the good. They are doubtless in truth but one ; but how and wherein they entwine their roots is a matter of some perplexity." And he ends with these words : "Good sense tells us that we shall not get the outside beautiful till we have made the inside beautiful. \* \* \* The inside is a matter of science, discipline, morality and religion."

Frederic Harrison may have his differences with Ruskin, but on the one material point there is no difference between them, for Ruskin has once for all laid down the law that *good taste is essentially a moral quality*. He pointedly says : "Tell me the sort of thing you like, and I shall tell you what sort of man you are." In other words, the liking of a man depends entirely on his character. We all know what a rake likes and a sot likes just as we know what is liked by an honest man and a good soul. The type of beauty that appeals to the former cannot but be shocking and revolting to the latter. No man in his senses then will say that art should be considered a good thing in itself if only pleasure is afforded by art. The whole question ultimately is a question of morality or, in other words, a problem of Dharma.

Says Tolstoy : "The estimation of the value of art depends on men's perception of the meaning of life, depends on what they consider to be the good and the evil of life. And what is good and what is evil is defined by what are termed religious."

The ancient Greeks, however, generally supposed that the beautiful must necessarily coincide with the good. Their greatest philosophers, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle may have struck a discordant note. For, "Socrates expressly subordinated beauty to goodness ; Plato, to unite the two conceptions, spoke of spiritual beauty ; while Aristotle demanded from art that it should have a moral influence on people." Still, as they could not entirely dissociate themselves from the popular notion of their country, Hellenism in Europe to-day stands over

against Hebraism. Though Matthew Arnold, 'a Levite in charge of the ark of culture,' to be fair to both, has assigned to the former only one-fourth of our life and to the latter as much as three-fourths, yet by trying to please everybody he has pleased nobody at all, for out-and-out people without 'sweetness and light' must have the whole thing or nothing at all.

The science of æsthetics, properly speaking, did not exist before the middle of the eighteenth century. Baumgarten laid the foundation of the science. Tolstoy in his famous book 'What is Art?' has surveyed the whole field of æsthetic theories, has given the substance of the views of philosophers like Kant and Hegel, Fichte and Schelling and has brought down his review to the end of the nineteenth century. The net result is the conclusion that æsthetics is a pseudo-science full of confusion of ideas. It has been built up, according to Tolstoy, on the misunderstanding that beauty and goodness must be necessarily identical, and this misunderstanding is due to modern Europe's loss of faith in Christian teaching or, in other words, modern Europe's growing materialism and moral degeneration. The degeneration is so deep that art for art's sake has become a fashionable creed, saints and prophets have been thrown overboard, and poets, novelists and painters no less than playwrights and musicians are lustily applauded for the simple reason that they cater for the 'cultured crowd.'

I am not aware if in ancient India there was ever a science of æsthetics in the European sense of the term. Alankâra-Shastra or Rasa-Shastra there was, but it corresponds to rhetoric (with poetics), and æsthetics and rhetoric are not one and the same. In Sukra-Niti much has been said about different kinds of art (Kalâ), their standards and ideals have been fixed and rules laid down for the guidance of artists. But Sukracharya, if I remember aright, has nowhere said that beauty and goodness must necessarily coincide. A series of erudite articles have been appearing in the Basumati (a Bengali Monthly published from Calcutta) from the pen of Pandit Pramathanath Tarkabhushan on Rasa-Shastra or Alankâra-

Shastra. According to him Bharat Muni who flourished most probably in the 1st century B. C., if not earlier, may be considered to have been the oldest writer on the subject. The learned Pandit has quoted numerous texts from Bharat Muni, Anandabardhan Acharya and others to show that the ancient Hindus never held that whatever is beautiful must necessarily be good and that the joy arising from the contemplation of beauty can at all be an end in itself. रसो वै सः,—“He is Joy itself,” सत्यं शिवं सुन्दरम्,—“The True, the Good, the Beautiful.”—These are texts that have reference to God, and what is known as Rasa-tatwa belongs to our Bhakti cult. These Rasas of the Bhakti-Shastra have nothing to do with Vishaya-ananda or the fleeting joy arising from the world of sense. But it appears that over-emphasis on Rasa by some people was soon misunderstood and brought about our moral degradation with the result that the pure religious art of the Hindus became filthy and sensual. The obscenities visible in many Hindu temples and the prevalence of eroticism or Adi-rasa in later Sanskrit poetry illustrates the truth of my remark.

No emphasis is necessary where natural tendency is strong. The emphasis should lie in the opposite direction. Without being a fanatic I can very well understand why Plato banished the poets from his Republic, why the Puritans were so hostile to the stage and why the Dhamma-pada of the Buddhists deprecates music itself.

Yet Hindu art at its best has its root deep in religion. Art need not be banished but should be purified and ennobled. Art is necessary as a vehicle of feelings, just as speech is necessary for communicating thoughts. Only the feelings sought to be conveyed must have a moral value of their own. Art should be an attempt to realise the ideal and a means of union between man and man. Its social value none can deny. Mere technique is not enough, nor should art be called good if only it conveys feelings, whatever the nature of the feelings may be.

Vedic hymns are good art, but they are also much more than art, and the composers of those hymns are called Rishis, because primarily they were the seers of



Truth. There was no separation in their lives between Hebraism and Hellenism. Their lives and art were one as their vision was one. The Bhagavad-Gita is the Song Celestial. *A Rishi may be a poet, but a poet as such is never a Rishi.* Vyasa and Valmiki were Rishis first and poets next. But not even Bhavabhuti and Kalidas are called Rishis, because they were poets. The place of Homer and Virgil, *Æschylus* and Sophocles, Dante and Tasso, Shakespeare and Milton is very high as poets, but no one in Europe ever classed them with David the Psalmist. The most important thing to be noticed in this connection is that in the history of the world never were the poets made so much of as they have been since the days of the Renaissance which marks the downward course of religious life. And the time since which they have been extolled to the skies dates no further back than the closing quarter of the eighteenth century. Even the post-Renaissance poets, Shakespeare and Milton, were obscure men in their times compared with the lesser lights of the last century and those of the present generation. Even Rudyard Kipling is a Nobel-prize man! *O tempora! O mores!*

The fashion prevalent in Europe does not take much time to cross over to India, and to-day we witness the whole country, specially Bengal, talking of art for art's sake. *Histrion*-worship bids fair to oust the worship of heroes. Nobody has ever said that the best poetry is didactic. All that has been urged by the well-wishers of the country is that the best poetry must have a moral aim by suggestion, if the necessity of art so requires. But the mischievous propagators of vicious art have no patience with those who mean well. 'Is art a schoolmaster?' is the art-maniacs' taunting reply. Rabindranath is no doubt an amiable man, a good man and a pious man. Though the so-called mysticism of the 'decadent' school of France—the 'mysticism' of Maeterlinck for example ('little Belgium has a French soul')—is traceable in some of his misty productions—to be misty is not to be a mystic,—yet most of his later poems have been deservedly praised not only for their sheer artistry but for their rich spiritual sugges-

tions and the devotional feeling they easily evoke. Unfortunately, however, as a poet, he is a man of conflicting moods and is not always consistent in all that he says. Thus we see that though in some of his poems there is the clear note of renunciation, the dominant note of India, without which a severe conception of life cannot be ever thought of, yet there are other poems from his pen which sing a different tune. Is this the voice of India? Rabindranath has also more than once said that the aim of poetry is the creation of joy (*Rasa-srishti*) and art should not be judged by the moral standard but be a law unto itself. The result is that in the hands of his satellites art has degenerated into shameless pornography which is a new menace to the life of Bengal. Some of the earlier works of Rabindranath, in spite of their refinement, are partly responsible for this lamentable phenomenon. I would rather not go into details, but I can refer the curious for particulars to the well-known Bengalee book '*Sahityer Swasthyaraksha*' (Literary Hygienics) by Babu Yatindramohan Sinha, a distinguished man of letters esteemed by all.

As for those of Rabindranath's followers who are not artists themselves but live his art, everyone has noticed in them an effeminate affectation, sloppy sentimentality, silly milksopism, cant of cosmopolitanism, 'superlative dandyism' and æsthetic pose. I do not know what to think of those who utter the names of Vivekananda, Gandhi and Rabindranath all in the same breath. Confusion of ideas must have a limit.

The new artists of Bengal all swear by the name of Rabindranath, and their greatest dread is asceticism which is the fundamental principle of morality—individual and domestic, social, political and economic, and without a clear recognition of which all talk of social, political and economic reform is no better than sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. This is the meaning of the 'root-and-branch reform' of Swami Vivekananda. Before we talk of nationalism we must clearly understand the soul of India, the genius and spirit of her hoary civilisation. It is the spirit of Nivritti, the spirit of sacrifice without which

nothing great in the world, in peace or war, has ever been accomplished. "First lessen your denominator. Unless my Algebra deceives me even one divided by zero gives infinite," says Carlyle. No nation-building without man-making—that is clear. Let us take care of the nation's heritage, and nationalism and cosmopolitanism will both take care of themselves, for India's problem is the world-problem, India being the epitome of the world. It will not even be necessary to raise the question of Hindu-Moslem unity. When you have said, तत्त्वमसि (That thou art), you have reached the highest synthesis—higher than that of the universal brotherhood of mono-theism.

But the new artists of Bengal have a constitutional horror of the very sound of asceticism. They have all decided that asceticism is the arch-enemy of their art, and so they use the expression *joie de vivre* to justify themselves. They conveniently forget that the bulk of the most inspiring hymns were composed by ascetics, that the Ajanta and Ellora are religious art. Surely they are well acquainted with the names of Mirabai and Tulsidas, Tukaram and Surdas, and I have no doubt that they know very well how fond is the ascetic Gandhi of their soul-stirring songs. It is very difficult to come across Stotras sweeter than those of Sankaracharya. Ramakrishna Paramahansa, as everybody knows, was not only a lover of songs but a great singer himself, and his ravishing strains have been the turning-point of many a man's life. But why multiply examples? None is so blind as he who *will* not see.

Our blooming artists need have no fear. The drought of asceticism will not dry up their joy. Let them take care of their souls, and art will take care of itself.

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## THE BIRTH OF BUDDHISM.

BY HARIPADA GHOSAL, VIDYABINODE, M.A., M.R.A.S.

Buddhism was born of a social necessity. When the mind of men was disgusted with too much ratiocination, when there was no outlet for knowledge, love and law, Buddhism burst forth breaking and crushing all bonds of the Unknown. The highest ideal of the Hindu is the attainment of Godhood, and in order to symbolise this great ideal—the result of strenuous culture and striving through long ages—in the world of action, Buddhism had to come down from the transcendental region of the Shruti. After the Mahabharata war, the political unity of India was broken. The highly compact structure of society was also broken down, and the centres of civilisation and culture had lost their former influence. Religion, sanctioned by the Shastras, was cooped and confined to the Ashramas and dragged on a precarious existence. In time, free ideas took their rise and did not accept the injunctions of the Shruti. Buddhism is an attempt to harmonise the old with the new. The high ideal of Hinduism was simplified for the people, and for this it was freed from the hard and fast bondages of the Shastras. To wipe off the tears of distress, to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth and to hold before the eyes of men the ideal of Jnana and Prema (knowledge and love), Buddhism arose in the land of Bharata.

Human life consists of many phases. Every religion has adopted some phase or other in trying to help a fuller development of life. Other religions have relegated to the cold shade of neglect the present mundane existence and aimed at after-life as the centre—the pivot of spiritual existence. But Buddhism has adopted the present existence as the nucleus of a fuller and ampler manifestation, and hence its object has been a complete realisation of an ideal life in this hard, practical, tangible world of ours. Man's life is a battle-ground of two opposing forces—of Prakriti and Prajna. Social and

individual progress is the resultant of these warring elements. Prakriti draws men towards Eternity—towards the Indefinite and the Unknown—the Transcendental: but Prajna towards the finite—the visible—towards experience and certain.

Other religions are the offsprings of the heart, but Buddhism is the child of the head. The universe is running to the search of the Creator under the impulse of the undifferentiated Prakriti. This blind Prakriti urges man towards the discovery of that much wished for region where lies the House Beautiful, full of supposed splendour and imaginary joy—the final resting-place—the celestial caravansary after a life of strenuous labour, struggle and pain. But Prajna drops from the womb of her mother Prakriti and is unwilling to follow her blind lead. Her speed is checked; the ray of hope is quenched; and the wayfarer comes to a dead calm in despair.

But deliverance is essential—is a crying need. So Prajna sits in contemplation and comes out, deeply imbued with the hopeful message of deliverance. She hears these words of wisdom—"Don't aspire to know what is beyond the veil. Throw down the heavy burden of the Unknown from your dreamy head. Awake, arise from your deep stupor, the result of your despair. Save yourself from the whirlpool of distress and pain and trouble you have been labouring under in the vain hope of eternal pleasure in heaven. Turn the whole course of your life towards the world as it is—towards the known—the finite. Crush down sorrow by your own strength and endeavour. Make an ideal world of love and morality of this earth."

Buddhism is this call to humanity to return to the hard realities of existence. If you ask whether there is anything behind this veil, you will get no answer from Prajna. The beginning and the end are a mystery. You should not go beyond your legitimate claims—you should not outstrip the bounds of your demand. Don't be led by false hopes and vain delusions. A limited being as you are, it is sheer folly on your part to try to

unravel the mysteries which words have not the power to paint and describe, where reason fails, before whose blazing majesty, the splendour of the sun, moon and stars and the dazzling lightning are cast into the shade. Don't continue your pursuit in search of that Original Cause which has no utility in this practical world. If there is no God, no soul, there is the Aryasutta, the miserable life of man on earth. Buddhism is nothing but a path to the annihilation of sorrow. Nirvana—the life of the Ideal—is the *summum bonum*—the highest attainment of man. If you ask if there is anything beyond Nirvana, the answer is silence—a long deep silence.

The basic principle of Hinduism is contained in the following ultimate questions:—What is Soul? Is it eternal or transitory? What is the relation of a living being with his body? If the soul is not eternal, if the individual soul is not separate from its body and if it has no existence after death, the whole structure of Hinduism will fall down. To Buddha all these questions appeared to be very complicated and their solution an arduous task for ordinary people. Men need not bother their heads with these unnecessary ideas to attain Nirvana.

But India has ever looked to the realisation of the all-pervading Soul—to the fuller humanity arising out of the harmony of Prajna and Prakriti. Individuality cannot stand there. The land of the Vedas and the Vedanta cannot brook or adopt a religion which ignores the transcendental which, though beyond the senses of knowledge, is true, real and eternal. The all-pure, all-knowing and free Soul has created a positive background of a greater world and mounted to this immortal home where the strings of heart are rent asunder and all desires and doubts are annihilated. This highest state—this blissful condition is the goal of its desire—the final resting-place of all its strivings. The world of action—the world of morals—the world of ordinary knowledge—is not the highest truth to the Hindu—is not his be-all and end-all—not the highest felicity to him.

Social abnegation was the key-note of monasticism,

But it carried in it the principle of organisation. Monastic life in India was not a new thing—it was not an innovation. Learned and pious Brahmanas retired into the forest and lived there a life of austerities and contemplation. There was no intercommunion or communication among isolated and individual Sannyasins. Each followed his particular bent of mind or doctrines invented by his own self or imparted to him by his spiritual preceptor. Buddha saw all this and thought of organising all the monks of his order into a great comaraderie which made association with each other easy and helped the communication of thoughts and learning of all.

But this institution—the father of all such institutions in the world—deteriorated a short time after the dissolution of the great Master's mortal frame. Buddha's great brotherhood of spirituality was lost owing to the admission of women into his grand Sangha and their free admixture with men. People who had any reason to be discontented with their worldly affairs or found no inducement in a home and family of their own—those who wished to avoid the struggles and hardships of the world—shaved their head and wore the ochre robe and with begging bowl in hand made no delay in entering the Sangha. The brotherhood increased rapidly. Monastic life became the order of the day. It was very inviting. The wilderness became a garden, stately Stupas and Viharas rose in places which were formerly solitary but which now afforded shelter to thousands of monks. The rich endowments of devout men and women drew idlers who shirked the responsibilities of an active worldly life and came to gloat on the riches supplied by religious enthusiasts.

The instinctive tendency of men to associate with their kind was so strong that these anchorites formed into compact bodies with patriarchs and nuns who, fallen from the high ideal of their Master, mixed promiscuously and lived a life of dissipation and gross immorality. The monks tried to get women proselytes. But the Order produced a good many men and women of great learning and deep erudition. The redeeming feature of the orga-

nisation is its impetus to painting, sculpture and literature. Its another merit is that it found suitable occupation in looking after disease, weakness and infirmities of suffering humanity. Peripatetic excursions of the monk broke the monotony of his sombre existence. Many caught in the glare began to embrace the new faith.

A religion like Buddhism cannot spring up in any and every land. Its birth had a back-ground of religious expression. Its birth and propagation is only possible in that land which has given shelter to all sorts of religious opinions—to all sorts of hopes and aspirations and desires of men. But through the inscrutable ways of fate, it could not last or get a permanent footing in the country of its birth. Like a disobedient son it was banished from its home and deprived of its patrimonial inheritance. It has appealed to the Christian countries of Europe. Christian Scholars have been especially attracted by it. But it could not strike its root into the soil of India. Brahminic religion and society have adopted and assimilated it so far as it has touched its fringe. It is its love of the present, which is the principal cause of its disappearance from India.

The reason why Buddhism propagated so rapidly and succeeded in keeping hold on a vast portion of mankind in other parts of the world, is its perfection of organisation, and the reason why it has been the greatest world-religion is its catholicity—its latitudinarianism—its recommendation of a *via media*—the golden mean which avoided the extremes of ascetic abstinence and gloom on the one hand, and of wordly dissoluteness and utter wrecklessness on the other. In the early years of his life, Buddha practised hard penances and austerities, but when the full flash of Jnana—the bright effulgence of Self-illumination flashed on him, he realised that they were unnecessary, and so he taught his followers the futility of fastings and mortifications. Thus he founded a philosophy of his own, as the great sage Kapila had done before and Sankara had done long after, by means of which he indicated a path by which man can get rid of



miseries and sufferings—of births and deaths that flesh is heir to.

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## BHAKTI OR LIFE IN THE VISION BEAUTIFUL.

BY T. L. VASWANI.

A beautiful story is told of a Christian saint. She was a little girl. She died a girl. Her face was beautiful. Yet more beautiful was her faith. A big Roman official's son fell in love with her. He promised her precious stones. She said: "Be gone: Another there is whom I love,—Jesus:" In her heart was love for gentle Jesus. She would not marry a mortal. The official had her stripped naked. But her hair grew long and covered her body as with a beautiful robe. The story is suggestive. That girl had Bhakti. The Bhakta sows in tears and tragedy. But he reaps in the Realm of the Beautiful 'where the great voices sound and visions dwell.'

In the Sutras of Narada, we read that Bhakti is of the form of Parama Prema. The word Parama is often interpreted to mean intense. Bhakti is intense love of God. But, I think, the word Parama may well be understood to mean transcendent or absolute. The Bhakta's love of God is absolute. It is not utilitarian. It is Ahetuka, motiveless,—though not causeless. It asks for no fruit. It is devoid of interest. The Bhakta loves God the Beautiful for His Blessed sake, not for the sake of reward, not even for Swargaloka (heaven). "Let me be damned, my God; if only I may love you," said St. Teresa. The world often understands not the Bhakta's ways. The world calls him a dreamer or a madman. He lives so much apart. He is an artist.

The 'Song of Songs' is a song of Bhakti. Whoever wrote it was an artist, a lover of the Beautiful. Sri Chaitanya was filled with a sense of the Beautiful. He

bathed in the consciousness of the Beautiful. The last act of his earth-life was a plunge into the blue waters. Rejoicing in the vision of the Beautiful, he passed on.

Absorption in God! Is not Bhakti something more mystical? To send Him back a fragment of His own love, so that we are reflected in Him and He in us,—what higher privilege may human life hold than this? Bhakti is absolute love of the soul for her Master. The Master is Love. In a deeper sense, indeed, Bhakti is the Master's own love realising itself in the Bhakta. God utters Himself in the form, the Rupa, of Bhakti.

Bhakti is not desire. True love is not desire. Most of the modern dramas make just this mistake. They confound sex-desire with love, Kama with Prema. Bywaters, they say, loved Mrs. Thompson. It was cruel to have sent them to the gallows. But it is wrong to hold them up as objects of admiration. He loved the woman,—wrote the papers. No. He desired her. It was an animal desire,—natural if you will, but animal all the same. Or he would not have murdered the woman's husband. True love cleans the soul. It must not be confounded with animalism. Bhakti must rise above the flesh, above the passional self, above the personal self and rejoice in the beauty of the Eternal Self. Not without reason has Bhakti been referred to in the Books as desirelessness. The thought is beautifully expressed in a prayer of the French mystic, Fenelon: "Lord! I know not what I ought to ask of Thee. O Father! Give to Thy child that which he himself knows not how to ask. I dare not ask either for crosses or consolation. I simply present myself before Thee; I open my heart to Thee. Behold my needs which I know not myself; see and do according to Thy tender mercy. Smite or heal; depress me or raise me up; I adore all Thy purposes without knowing them. I am silent; I offer myself in sacrifice; I yield myself to Thee. I would have no other desire than to accomplish Thy will. Teach me to pray. Pray Thyself in me."

The Bhakta is desireless because he has knowledge of God's love. Religion is not mere feeling. The Bhakta's life is not one of mere impulse or emotion. He

has Jnana. Many things of life and the world, of history and science, of culture and civilisation he may not know. But he knows the one thing needful—the knowledge of God's love. Hence his desirelessness is not something negative. It is a positive self-surrender to the Divine love. The Bhakta, thus, does not despise the world, does not hate the visible. To him things and forms of life are a mask of the only Love ; and he knows that the service of man is also the worship of God. "Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The Bhakta, whether silent or singing the sacred name, or doing his appointed duty, or serving his society, or communing with Nature, or struggling for justice, moves in an atmosphere of the Beautiful. Voices of freedom are heard here, there, everywhere, to-day. Our life demands freedom. Only let us remember that freedom itself must move in an atmosphere of the Spirit. The modern concept of freedom needs to be enriched by the ancient vision of God the Beautiful. Bhakti is not ascetic aloofness from life. Bhakti grows out of the depths of life where love works hand in hand with death.

This is love's immortality. Love gives beauty even to death. It is written in the Books that Bhakti is of the Rupa of Amrita. And Amrita is, literally, 'not dead'. Amrita means life everlasting. Bhakti grows out of life that plunges into matter,—into the very depths of death,—to unfold love's destiny. Bhakti must not be a pale abstraction. Bhakti must grow out of fellowship with Life,—out of communion with Nature and the service of Man. How wonderful are Nature and Humanity to him who has this fellowship with Life ! The Bhakta realises the romance of reality. He sees the visible clothed with wonder and beauty. Nothing to him is secular. The material is to him an apparition of the Spiritual,—the national, an organ of the Eternal. The faces of men and women and children are to him masks of the One Face he adores. Science and civilisation and the business of the city bring him messages of the Love who turns Maya into Leela, everyday. Nature is to him a procession of

the Spirit. There was a mountaineer who loved flowers and grew them in his garden. One day he fell ill. He was laid up in the bed. He could not move out to tend his flowers. But he looked at them lovingly, sadly, through his window, day after day. One day, as he sat at the window, looking at the flowers, he saw lovely little children clothed in many colours and singing amid the flowers of his garden. The mountaineer gazed at the children and was delighted with their beauty and song. He asked them who they were. They told him they were the flower-spirits come to heal him with their songs. That mountaineer had in him the soul of a Bhakta. He loved beauty and song. His eyes could see the flower-spirits. He was healed. That story is only a parable.

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## LUTHER AT WORMS.

BY BRAHMACHARI KUMARA CHAITANYA.

It was a serious moment in the history of civilisation. The curtain parted into two. Some challenging words were heard—"To revoke these writings would be to give new force and audacity to the Roman tyranny. I cannot, *I will not retract.* \* \* \* I can do no otherwise. Here I stand. God help me. Amen."

Such was the memorable, momentous and solemn declaration of that strange, stubborn and strong man—Martin Luther, before a huge concourse of men, both secular and sacerdotal, at the famous city of Worms. The fate of Europe trembled in the balance. It signalled a decisive departure in the thought-history of mankind. A storm in the mind of Europe was fast approaching, and Martin was there in the lime-light of public life as its incontrovertible, eloquent testimony. Nobody could question it at that stage. Papacy had played with human weakness, frailty and credulity to its heart's content. Men were so long mere tools or mute spectators without

a single word of disapproval to tyrannic engines of the Church that is best described as detestable prostitution of faith. There was undeniably a hankering for a new order of things, a thorough cleansing of the Augean stable.

The dawn of a new age was heralded by the Renaissance. The birth-pangs and sufferings attending it were rather of a severe type. That was the lot of Europe destined by Providence. At last she awoke. Reformation of faith followed as the next logical step. The two movements were interdependent. In order to feel as Luther felt, we have to forget our present and by a judicious exercise of historical imagination, fancy ourselves to be citizens of Germany in that momentous epoch full four centuries back.

But what sort of man was he that had the super-human courage to face such enormous odds, in taking his bold stand against the agelong authority of the Supreme Pontiff whom the credulity of previous generations believed to have in his possession the keys of heaven and hell, to be used at his discretion? Luther stood there as the uncompromising champion of religious freedom and freethinking, with reason as her handmaid. The movement cannot be understood without a peep into the man—its originator. Not only the sixteenth century but universal history itself has pronounced him as one of the greatest of lives ever lived by man. Needless to say the verdict has been passed after due discrimination.

The greatest wonder about him was his rise from the lowest stratum of human society. Indeed, of him it may be said that he was veritably a Plebeian among the Plebs. And all through life he was justly proud of his peasant ancestry. "This is God's way," wrote he in after-life, "of beggars to make men of power, just as He made the world of nothing."

His father intended him for the bar. He nevertheless felt the call of a life spiritual and dedicated himself to God in his innermost heart. The words of the Master urged him to sacrifice himself at the altar of God—"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time." The father who was but a poor miner, equipped him with

an admirable education that he might take to a lucrative career. But the God of history intended otherwise and kept that youth apart for things higher, fuller and nobler. So in 1505 Luther joined an Augustine monastery with the words of Jesus Christ ringing in his ears—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and everything else will be added unto you." Then ensued those days of study and silent meditation amidst the sacred precincts of the hermitage, so very important for every ardent spiritual life.

At Worms, his stand on that bold message of his, teaching men to be true and sincere to their faith irrespective of persons, was in itself a great thing, but this was reached by stages. Let us follow these to appreciate him more fully.

The sturdy, sincere monk, true to mediæval traditions, became a teacher of men and bore the torch of learning most gloriously. To his contemporaries he was truly a dynamic spiritual force. And the students of the Wittenberg University realised everyday that it was 'a heart speaking to a heart', for their Professor was inspiration personified. To see him was to love him, to hear him was to admire him.

Next came the visit to the Eternal City, so very full of sacred associations. But the heart of that earnest monk was sorely shocked at the sight of utter ecclesiastical abuses which were in full swing. The sale of Indulgences by a Tetzl was a veritable menace to men's real spiritual development, and so Luther took a vow quite in earnest to do away with that corrupt system. That was just the spirit of a sincere heart. His 'Ninety-five Theses' was but a denial and an emphatic protest against that fatal current doctrine that a sinner requires simply a monetary payment to appease God and nothing more.

At the Diet of Augsburg in 1518, the Emperor Maximilian, out of petty secular motives, refused support to this 'heretic' monk. The schism began to grow. The next year in the famous Controversies of Leipzig Luther won the support of contemporary scholars like Melancthon and Hutten. Still at this stage in his 'Address to the

Nobility' he was not anti-Papal, really speaking. He was at first only up against the abuses and corruptions that were polluting the fair name of the Church. But the fire of Reformation began to grow in volume with the persistent, obdurate attitude of the Church in trying to perpetuate its evil practices.

The Papal Bull, a rank indictment against Luther, was of little practical efficacy. He had already become too powerful a force to be touched and harmed by it. The ocular sign came very soon. Before an admiring crowd of doctors, students and citizens in Wittenberg, the Bull was consigned to the flames. The whole of the Fatherland began to shake with great excitement.

Just at this moment, in the winter of the memorable year 1521 came the call to Luther to present himself before the famous assembly. Emperor Charles V had called a conference at Worms on the 28th day of January. It was a terrible ordeal for the movement and a crucial test for Luther. An order had already gone forth to destroy all the writings of that audacious monk. His earnest well-wishers advised him not to face such an assembly at all, for they apprehended the greatest of perils for him—his death. But Luther was not a man to swerve an inch from his position. For, if he did that, he would thereby have falsified his past life of preparation—a life of rigorous discipline and self-resignation. He was too intensely full of love for his cause and was ever ready for the supremest of sacrifices. With the characteristic force of a determined, strong mind, he bluntly burst forth—"I would go, though there were as many devils as there are tiles on the roofs of the houses." The journey to Worms was in itself a triumph.

The conference at last took place. It was a most striking scene—the large audience listening with rapt attention in perfect silence to that powerful, inspired monk with his face shining with a divine light, with occasional deep tones which promised both strength and beauty, presenting lofty and austere ideals with intense earnestness and conviction. The total impression conveyed was one of strength united and controlled by

judgment. Historical imagination still enlivens the picture in our memory very often. Aristocracy, wealth, corruption, nepotism and high-handed authority were all there, to be at last stunned, stupefied and defeated most ignominiously in the ultimate issue, by a mere beggar, an out-and-out upstart in their eyes.

Luther's work was an admirable advocacy of the cause of Reformation. But the men in authority were too much puffed up with pride to listen to that warning. The history of religious reformation in Europe would not have been stained and polluted by bloodshed if the conveners of the conference were actuated by a spirit of compromise and rapprochement. The Emperor was guided by political motives. State interest was uppermost. Luther was declared a heretic. But all the same his movement progressed with added vigour against all external obstacles. As a final result of Luther's statement men's inner outlook was changed. And as in many individual lives, victory came through this apparent failure at Worms. Luther saw that his path was not smooth, and he believed himself to be 'born to fight innumerable devils and monsters, to remove stumps and stones, to cut down thistles and thorns and to clear the wild woods'.

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## WHAT THE COUNTRY NEEDS MOST.

Thoughtful people of the West are nowadays busy in devising means for producing a better manhood. For an all-round development of their children, the future hope of their country, model residential institutions are being started everywhere, and instruction is being imparted with an eye to the natural tendencies of the young learners. Though heredity is a great factor in determining the future career of a boy or girl, still the influence of environment cannot be lost sight of. It is a fact of commonplace observation that by the influence of environ-



ment we can derive wonderful results, and everyone who has some experience in teaching and training children will admit it.

But unfortunately we, the people of India, are negligent in this respect. We do not generally pay so much attention to the training of our children as the Westerners do. And the result is the deplorable wastage of much human material. Brahmacharya or chastity which was formerly a primary condition of the student life in India, has now become a thing of the past, and our boys and girls while prosecuting their studies are deprived of the healthy and holy atmosphere of the ancient Gurukula and exposed to all the bad and unhealthy influences of the town life. Hence it is not a wonder that the young susceptible minds will reap all the baneful effects of the town life and be moulded accordingly.

Mere superficial moral precepts given in schools and colleges will be of no use. We must overhaul our present educational system and remodel it according to our ancient ideals and traditions. We should see that our boys and girls get opportunities for leading a pure and holy life, free from all the temptations which young minds are generally subject to. They must live in personal touch with ideal teachers who embody in their life purity, nobility, love and self-sacrifice, along with the usual academical qualifications. A good many of our youths nowadays bring about their ruin by contracting all sorts of baneful habits, and there is none to correct them. Unless and until they see before them living examples of ideal characters constantly helping them, they will not mend their ways. Any amount of moral maxims imparted will be of no avail. It is for this reason that the ancient system of education is a crying need of our country now.

Mere segregation cannot correct a youth who has gone astray. There must be someone who will go forward with soothing words of advice and help and influence the mind of the youth by his own life and character. Many acknowledge with regret that had they been

favoured by good environment, their mode of life would have been quite different. Moreover, there are some who are eager to go back to the proper track; but, not knowing how to overcome their obstinate mind, they despair of improving themselves. At this stage a little help in the shape of good counsel and advice may accomplish much. We are all dreaming of a glorious future for our country. But we never for a moment pause to think that we are retarding the growth of our national life by the neglect of our youth, the future hope of the country.

In order to save the students from demoralising influences, the establishment of model residential institutions or at least of ideal hostels is an immediate necessity. And ideal teachers should be entrusted with the responsible work of looking to the welfare of the students. Any and every man is not fit for the teaching profession. And in training, selfless love and solicitude should take the place of rigorous discipline. There are thousands of Sannyasins in this land, and many of them represent the highest ideals of life. It is for them to take up this task. Will some of them condescend to come forward and devote their life in this noble cause? Or else who will save this degenerate race?\*

The Christian missionaries, coming from distant lands, have started properly equipped hostels for our students in almost every city or town, and there is a keen competition amongst our young men for securing seats there. And what are we, Indians, doing? This should open our eyes. I am sure funds will not be wanting, if some body enjoying the confidence of the people starts such institutions. We know there are some institutions, started and managed by profiteering business men, and they are no better than juvenile jails, doing more harm than good. What I emphasise is that selfless men of ideal character,

\* Perhaps the writer knows that some ideal educational institutions after the model of the ancient Gurukula have already been started, and they are doing good work for the training of the youths of our country. Of course, they are few in number in proportion to the need.—Ed., P. B.

especially of the Sannyasin class, should be entrusted with this work. Will the country respond to my appeal?

“AN AGGRIEVED.”

### THE HINDU MAHASABHA.

It was an able, lucid and comprehensive address which Lala Lajpat Rai delivered as the President of the 8th session of the Hindu Mahasabha, held on the 11th April last at Halliday Park, Calcutta. Among other things, Lalaji referred to the question of the depressed classes, the need of abolishing Purdah among Hindu women, the proper education of youngmen, the frontier problem, the political aims of the Sabha and such other topics. He also repudiated the imputations of some that the Mahasabha is anti-national, and of others that it is anti-Hindu. He also outlined a programme for the consideration of the Mahasabha, embracing such practical items as relief to the Hindu sufferers on account of communal riots, organisation of gymnasiums for the Hindu Youths, reconversion of Hindus, popularisation of the Hindi language etc.

There are one or two other topics in Lalaji's address which deserve consideration. One such is the doctrine of Ahimsa. On this point, Lalaji observes that the Bhagavad Gita is the best guide and that “we cannot afford to be so weak and imbecile as to allow or encourage others to crush us, nor can we be obsessed by false ideas of Ahimsa, but at our peril.” Our own views on this matter have so often been expressed in these pages as to need no repetition. Nor is there any essential difference of opinion among the leaders in actual practice. Even Mahatma Gandhi who is on principle an exponent of the doctrine of Ahimsa as an absolute truth, has never countenanced weakness or cowardice of any kind. If, in spite of all this, the Hindus

are still found to be wanting in courage and manliness, the reasons must be sought elsewhere. Another point worth considering is that this preaching of non-violence broad-cast began only a few years ago with the Mahatmaji's ascension to leadership and before this the Hindus were not known to have been materially different. If anything has resulted from this teaching, it can be said that the people at least now have not become less courageous and self-sacrificing than before.

Lalaji rightly deplores that the system of Varnâshrama Dharma based on sound principles has disappeared. Everyone will agree with him when he says that 'neither the Varnas nor the Ashramas are to be found in their original conditions or any way near them.' Leaving the re-establishment of these on their original principles an open question, he emphatically declares that only destruction can be the result of the attempt to impose the whole Dharma of a Sannyasin upon young men. While it will be admitted on all hands that the Dharma of one Ashrama cannot be the same or right for any other Ashrama, many would not be inclined to accept his interpretation of the Shastras that 'no one is allowed to become a Sannyasin or to undertake the duties of a preacher without having passed through the mill of Grihasthâshrama.' He further declares:—"It is a matter of extreme pain to me that there should be a number of Hindu scholars and leaders in the country who are inculcating Vairagya and Sannyasa Dharma to Young-men. In my judgment it is entirely opposed to the real spirit of the Hindu culture that children and young men should be filled in with the teachings of Vairagya." He also believes that such a teaching necessarily leads to 'laziness, false contentment, cowardice and lack of spirit and also to unmanliness.'

It is a great pity that Lalaji did not think it necessary or worth his while to indicate who these Hindu scholars and leaders are. We confess we are unaware of the existence of any such men or of their teachings. Also what exactly is meant by the teaching of Vairagya and Sannyasa is not quite clear. Nor are we able to see how

laziness, cowardice, unmanliness etc., could at all follow from Vairagya or Sannyasa if it is properly understood and practised. The broad meaning of these terms as taught by the Bhagavad Gita is that the renunciation of actions performed with a desire for results is Sannyasa, and the dispassion for the enjoyment or the abandonment of the fruits of all actions is Vairagya or Tyâga. It is also well-known that the Gita condemns most strongly the giving up of one's duties and responsibilities on account of fear, pain etc, or from delusion, and praises the performance of duties, giving up attachment and fruits. Understood in this light, not only does the doctrine of Sannyasa not preach laziness, cowardice etc., but through that spirit alone could any great public or disinterested service be rendered efficiently. Perhaps Lalaji has before his mind the large number of so-called Sadhus who are leading lazy and by no means creditable or worthy lives. In this connection, it must be remembered that the vast majority of these are not Sadhus at all, but only beggars who get themselves entered in the census figures as Sadhus or Faquirs that they may have a more honourable status.

It is needless to labour this point further, and we shall content ourselves with a brief consideration of the teachings, on this point, of the Swami Vivekananda, who of all modern men, preached most to his countrymen the teachings of the Upanishads and Vedanta emphasising the spirit of Vairâgya or Sannyasa. In a parting address to the Sannyasins of the Belur Math on the eve of his departure to the West in the year 1899, he said that Sannyasa meant trying to do good to others and that Vairagya or renunciation was the 'love of death.' Explaining this he said,—'It is right for you that you should serve your millions of brothers rather than aggrandise this little self. Thus you must die a gradual death. In such a death is Heaven, all good is stored therein—and in its opposite is all that is diabolical and evil. \* \* \* You must be prepared to go into deep meditation now, and the next moment you must be ready to go and cultivate these fields (pointing to the lands of

the Math). You must be prepared to explain the difficult intricacies of the Shastras now, and the next moment to go and sell the produce of the fields in the market. You must be prepared for all menial services, not only here, but elsewhere also." Few, we believe, would doubt that the more our young men acquire this spirit of Sannyasa, the better will it be for our country. We are happy to find that Sir P. C. Roy, Chairman of the Reception Committee, emphasised this need in the following words—"In order to regain our position, we must sink our narrow differences, and while glorying in the achievements of the ancient saints and sages, mould our lives and build our social fabric according to the lofty principles of righteousness and morality which found such noble expression in their character and teachings."

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## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from p. 184.)

न नरः स्वर्गतिं कांक्षेन्नारकीं वा विचक्षणः ॥

नेमं लोकं च कांक्षेत देहावेशात्प्रमाद्यति ॥ १३ ॥

13. The wise man should seek neither<sup>1</sup> heaven nor hell, nor desire to return to this world, for he comes under delusion through attachment to the body.

[<sup>1</sup> Neither &c.—because both are lower.]

एतद्विद्वान्पुनः मृत्योरभवाय घटेत सः ॥

अप्रमत्त इदं ज्ञात्वा मर्त्यमप्यर्थसिद्धिदम् ॥ १४ ॥

14. Conscious of this fact, he should be alert and struggle for liberation before death comes on, knowing that the body, even though mortal, can help him to attain his goal.

छिद्यमानं यमैरेतैः कृतनीडं वनस्पतिम् ॥

खगः स्वकेतमुत्सृज्य क्षेमं याति ह्यलम्पटः ॥ १५ ॥

15. Seeing that the tree on which it built its nest is being felled by cruel hands, the bird giving up attachment leaves its home and attains<sup>1</sup> to well-being.

[1 Attains &c.—is saved.]

अहोरात्रं शिद्यमानं बुद्धं त्र्युर्भयवेपथुः ॥

मुक्तसङ्गः परं बुद्ध्वा निरीह उपशम्यति ॥ १६ ॥

16. Similarly, knowing that his span of life is being cut short by the rotation of days and nights, the wise man trembles in fear, and giving up all attachment realises the Supreme Being. Then he is free from activity<sup>1</sup> and is at peace.

[1 Activity—for his own sake.]

नृदेहमाद्यं सुलभं सुदुर्लभं प्लवं सुकल्पं गुरुकर्णधारम् ॥

मयानुकूलेन नभस्वतेरितं पुमान्भवाब्धिं न तरेत्स आत्महा ॥ १७ ॥

17. Getting the first and foremost requisite, viz., a human body, which is like a strong boat—so difficult to secure, yet within<sup>1</sup> easy reach—with the Teacher<sup>2</sup> as its helmsman, and propelled by Me<sup>3</sup> as by a favourable wind—with such means as these, the man who does not strive to cross the ocean of Samsara,<sup>4</sup> is verily a suicide.

[1 Within &c.—by a rare piece of good-luck.

2 Teacher—whom one has but to approach.

3 Me—as soon as I am prayed to.

4 Samsara—rotation of birth and death.]

यदारम्भेषु निर्विण्णो विरक्तः संयतेन्द्रियः ॥

अभ्यासेनात्मनो योगी धारयेदचलं मनः ॥ १८ ॥

18. When he has got disgusted with undertakings and is averse to their results, the Yogi, with his senses under control, should hold the mind steady by the practice of meditation on the Atman.

[Verses 18—26 deal with Jnana-Yoga and its preliminary steps.]

धार्यमाणं मनो यर्हि भ्राम्यद्बन्धनवस्थितम् ॥

अतन्नित्रतोऽनुरोधेन मार्गेणात्मवशं नयेत् ॥ १६ ॥

19. When the mind, in the act of being concentrated, begins immediately to wander and is unsteady, then being alert he should bring it within his control by following<sup>1</sup> a conciliatory way.

[<sup>1</sup> *Following &c.*—allowing some concessions to its weaknesses.]

मणोगतिं न विसृजेज्जितप्राणो जितेन्द्रियः ॥

सस्वसंपन्नया बुद्ध्या मन आत्मवशं नयेत् ॥ २० ॥

20. He should not lose<sup>1</sup> sight of the course of his mind, but holding his Prana and sense-organs in subjugation, he should bring the mind under his control by means of an intellect charged with Sattva.

[<sup>1</sup> *Not lose &c.*—not allow it to drift altogether.]

एष वै परमो योगो मनसः संग्रहः स्मृतः ॥

हृदयश्चतुर्मुखमन्विच्छन्दम्यस्येवार्चतो मुहुः ॥ २१ ॥

21. This sort of control of the mind is spoken of<sup>1</sup> as the highest Yoga,—like<sup>2</sup> the control of an unruly horse with a view to make him conform to his riders' wishes at every step.

[<sup>1</sup> *Spoken of &c.*—i.e. by way of compliment—since it leads to that.

<sup>2</sup> *Like &c.*—as the breaker of a horse has to run some distance with the animal, holding however the reins tight in his hands, so the Yogi in certain cases should allow the mind to wander a little, keeping a strict watch on its movements, and then little by little gain mastery over it.]

सांख्येन सर्वभावानां प्रतिलोमानुलोमतः ॥

भवाप्ययावनुश्रयायेन्मनो यावत्प्रसीदति ॥ २२ ॥

22. One should reflect through discrimination on the origin and dissolution of all things<sup>1</sup> in their backward<sup>2</sup> and forward order, till the mind is at rest

[Slokas 22—25 set forth the method of bringing under complete control the partially controlled mind.

<sup>1</sup> *All things*—from the subtlest to the grossest manifestations.

<sup>2</sup> *Backward &c.*—tracing them successively to their ultimate cause Prakriti, and again reversing the process.]



निर्विण्णस्य विरक्तस्य पुरुषस्योक्तवेदिनः ॥

मनस्त्यजति दौरात्म्यं चिन्तितस्यानुचिन्तया ॥ २३ ॥

23. The mind of a man who is disgusted with the world is possessed of dispassion, and has understood the teachings of his Guru, gives up its wickedness<sup>1</sup> by repeatedly reflecting on them.

[1 *Wickedness*: A literal interpretation would yield the meaning, 'identification with things other than the Self, such as the body etc.']

(*To be continued.*)

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

INDIA, AMERICA AND WORLD BROTHERHOOD.—By Dr. J. T. Sunderland, M.A., D.D. Published by Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 295. Price, Rs. 3/-.

The book consists of three parts. In the first part, a chapter each is devoted to Abraham Lincoln, one of the greatest democrats of the world, William Lloyd Garrison, the most conspicuous and heroic leader of the great anti-slavery struggle in America, and Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, the eminent leader of the women emancipation movement in America. In the second part, there are seven chapters all dealing with India's struggle for freedom and nationhood, wherein the writer's deep sympathy for India, his love for justice, fair-play and truth are conspicuous. In the third part, the problem of the 'World-wide Brotherhood' is discussed in all its aspects.

The book deserves to be read both by Europeans and Indians and especially by all lovers of world-peace. The printing and get-up, as is characteristic of the publishers, leaves nothing to be desired.

SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF THE INDIAN PRINCES.—By Dr. Taraknath Das, M.A., Ph.D. Published by the same. Pp. 105. Price Re. 1/-.

The one rather intricate problem which has to be solved in the determination of the future political evolu-

tion of India is the status of the Indian princes in the future United States of India. The author considers how the British Suzerainty came to be established over the Princes of India, the isolation of the latter and the limitation of their sovereignty, the function and utility of the Chamber of Indian Princes, and the recovery of the sovereignty of Asiatic States. It is an interesting study of the problem of the Native States in India.

**GANDHISM IN THEORY AND PRACTICE.**—By Nripendra Chandra Bandyopadhyaya. Published by the same. Pp. 175. Price, As. -/8/-.

These are a collection of articles which appeared in the columns of the 'Servant' from time to time. It is a thought-provoking publication.

**THE GOSPEL OF LOVE (NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS).**—Published by the same. Price not mentioned.

All the eighty-four Sutras are printed in the Devanâgarî character with their English translations.

**GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI.**—Published by the same. Pp. 119. Price, Re. 1/-.

The teachings of a great man are always a source of inspiration to ordinary mortals. As such, the utterances of a world-figure like Mahatmaji who represents in his life the highest ideals and the noblest principles, are things that posterity will not willingly let die. The book before us contains a choice selection of Mahatmaji's utterances, and they have been arranged under the following heads:—(1) Satyagraha; (2) Politics; (3) Ethics, Health etc.; (4) Unity; (5) Social Reform; (6) Economics. We hope the book will serve as a useful compendium to those who want to have an idea about Mahatmaji's teachings.

**SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON INDIA AND HER PROBLEMS.**—Compiled by Swami Nirvedananda. Published by Swami Santoshananda from the R. K. Mission, Students' Home, 6A Banka Rai Street, Calcutta. Pp. 71. Price, As. -/8/-.

As the compiler writes in the Foreword, the book contains some extracts from the speeches and writings of

the great Swami Vivekananda bearing on some of the momentous problems of our country. The gleanings have been judiciously arranged as to form the following topics :—

(1) Our Motherland; (2) National Workers; (3) Service within the Land; (4) Service Abroad. A book like this has a value of its own and has removed a long-felt want.

By its perusal we can have a bird's-eye view of Swamiji's utterances on our national ideal in all its phases, social, economical, political and religious. We hope it will be welcomed by the reading public and will have a wide circulation. The get-up and the printing of the book have become nice, and a portrait of the Swami in the beginning has added to its attractiveness.

## THE NINETIETH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

### BOMBAY.

The birthday was celebrated with the usual eclat at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Khar Road, Bandra, Bombay. The *tithi* was observed on Tuesday, the 24th February with special Puja, Bhajan and distribution of Prasad.

The public celebration took place on Sunday the 8th March in a spacious pandal specially created for the occasion. There was a large and representative gathering consisting of the elite of the city. The members of different communities and religions met at the Ashrama to pay their hearts' tribute to the Prophet of religious harmony and toleration.

The morning programme consisted of Madrasī Bhajan, Bengali Kirtan, as also of music in Guzratī. Hindi and Bengali by expert singers. The admirable concert organised by some Bengali gentlemen of Bombay was highly appreciated by all. Mr. Dhurandhar gave an interesting discourse in Marathi. About 400 people, including poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA 235

The public meeting was held in the Marwadi Vidyalaya Hall with Mr. M. R. Jayakar in the chair. Among others Messrs. K. Natarajan, J. K. Mehta, G. B. Trivedi, Swami Yatiswarananda, Dr. Rajaballi Patel spoke on different aspects of Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings. The president brought the proceedings to a successful close with his impressive and interesting speech.

### NAGPUR.

The birthday was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Craddock Town, Nagpur, on the 1st March. The Ashrama was decorated, and the portraits of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were placed in a prominent position. There was the feeding of the Daridra Narayanas at noon. In the evening a well-attended open air meeting was held on the Ashrama grounds. After some Bhajan and the introductory remarks by the President, Rao Bahadur V. N. Kelkar, retired Sessions Judge, Nagpur, S. J. M. Bhowani Sankar Neyogi, M.A., the well-known pleader and publicist of C. P. and Behar, delivered an illuminating lecture on "Sri Ramakrishna and Harmony of Religions" in English. Then Prof. Madan Gopal M.A., spoke in Hindi.

### AMRAOTI.

Under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna High School, Amraoti, the birthday was celebrated with great enthusiasm on the 24th, 25th and 26th of February. The programme of the celebration contained lectures on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, Bhajan, Puja etc. Though the function was quite a new thing to this province (Berar), it was a grand success.

### OOTACAMOND.

The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were observed on the 1st March at the Ramakrishna Hermitage and Mandir, Kandal, Ootacamond. In the morning special Puja was performed. A number of

music parties came from among the different sections of the local Badagas and entertained the assembled people. In the noon there was distribution of Prasad to the Bhaktas. In the afternoon a meeting was held under the presidency of Mr. Narasinha Rao of the local Sub Court. Lectures on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were delivered by some distinguished gentlemen. This was followed by a Harikatha Kalakshepan and Bhajan.

#### RANGOON.

Under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Mission Society, Rangoon, the anniversary was successfully celebrated. The Tithi Puja was observed on 24th February. The public celebration came off on 1st March at the local Baijunath Singh School. There was music followed by distribution of Prasad in the morning. At noon 700 Poor Narayanas were fed. In the evening a public meeting was held under the presidency of Mr. N. C. Banerjee, Editor, *Rangoon Mail*, in which Messrs. M. Mukherji, S. Ramaswami Iyer and S. K. Basu spoke in English, Prof. Anurup Singh in Hindi, and Messrs. Bholanath and Sasibhushan Chakravarty in Bengali, on different aspects of Sri Ramakrishna's life. The members of the Arya Sangitalay entertained the audience with their concert playing.

#### OTHER PLACES.

Besides these above mentioned places the following centres also celebrated the birthday: Sri Ramakrishna Maths at Bhubaneswar, Mymensingh and Allahabad; the Ramakrishna Kutir, Almora, the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, Calcutta, Adwaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas, etc.

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## NEWS AND NOTES.

### INDIAN FIRST !

In recent times, the number of religious, denominational and class or caste conferences seems to be steadily increasing. Under ordinary circumstances, this fact in itself need not be deemed dangerous or undesirable. But in the peculiar situation in which India finds herself to-day, unless extraordinary caution is exercised, there is every danger of the growth of the spirit of disunion and dissipation of energies.

We are glad to find that the liberal and enlightened ruler of Mysore, in opening the All-India Jain Conference held recently at Sravanbelagola, thought it fit and necessary to utter a note of warning against such a contingency. H. H. the Maharaja, after commending the wisdom of the promoters of the Conference in confining it to purely religious and social matters, most wisely observed :—"Let me not, however, be misunderstood in this commendation as putting politics outside the pale of your consideration as something to be dreaded or ignored. On the contrary, I feel that every educated person should take an earnest and intelligent interest in the political questions of the day and contribute his and (I ought, perhaps, to add) her share towards the solution of the problems that must inevitably arise from the necessity of adapting the organisation of humanity to the needs of its expanding consciousness. But you, gentlemen, have assembled here as members of a particular religious community having religious and social problems peculiarly your own. \* \* \* But in the sphere of politics, whether concerning India as a whole or any of the areas of which it is composed, *you are Indians first* and Jains afterwards. As Jains you command the sympathetic interests of everyone in looking at the problems of your community from your particular standpoint. As Indians, your political point of view, as also the political point of view

of every other religious community in India, should in my opinion, be that of India as a whole."

We hope that the excellent advice which His Highness tendered to all communities has not fallen on deaf ears. Another observation, most opportune, was the fact that when purely social and religious questions invade politics, the progress of the country must inevitably be retarded. Those who are familiar with the current phases of the political life of our country need hardly any arguments to be convinced of the reality of this danger. The surest remedy lies in all classes and communities acting towards one another in a spirit of mutual toleration and love, and placing the interests of India as a whole before everything else.

#### HOW TO REMOVE THE INCUBUS OF EXAMINATIONS?

Is the examination system an evil in itself or whether it is made so by overemphasising its importance is a question which has often been discussed, but so far the controversy has come to no definite end. In the course of an article in the Indian Social Reformer, all such defects as that the examination system encourages cramming, extinguishes genius, works the intellect, establishes false standards of excellence etc. etc. are all admitted. It also quotes from the Saturday Review a strong condemnation of the examination system in the following words—"An examination impending over a teaching course always dominates that course. No teacher is able to escape it; hardly a pupil dares to escape it. To pass the examination is the aim of the course, not to teach or to learn. Of course few teachers would admit this—some of the best would—but the facts to any unbiassed observer are conclusive."

According to the Reformer, "it is the place assigned to the examination in the programme of a university that decides whether its influence is to be for good or bad.  
\* \* \* A teaching course that gives undue importance to the examination is undoubtedly an evil; and that is really what is the matter with our universities. The

professors and tutors that form the teaching body should see that the student does not allow himself to be obsessed by the examination." It is suggested that by reducing the number of lecture hours so as to enable the students and the professors to make a more liberal and extensive use of the library and by making the students work by himself under his professor's guidance, the examination need not be the bug-bear that it is to-day.

We are afraid that the changes proposed would not minimise the evil to any very appreciable extent, nor would it lie in the power of the professors and tutors to remove the obsession of the examination so long as the form and method of the examination itself remain unchanged. As is well known, the student is examined in all the courses which he has covered during a period of two years or more, at a continuous stretch by means of question papers which more often than not embody the whims and vagaries of examiners, sometimes making it possible even for an intelligent and conscientious student to be plucked. We believe that some radical change in the very method of testing the capacity of the student alone will bring about any permanent and satisfactory results.

This is a question to be solved by a conference of experts. These are some of the modifications that suggest themselves to us:—

(1) That the professor should set a number of broad essays from time to time to be written by the students under his guidance, thus covering all the important topics of the lectures of the term.

(2) That marks or values be given to their essays which will go to determine their success or failure.

(3) That the results of the college annual examinations be another determining factor.

(4) That in the case of all conferments of degrees, an impartial commission of expert educationists should visit the different colleges and test the students' capacity by personal talks.

(5) That a thesis be required of each aspirant for a



degree showing his grasp of the subject and how far he has developed habits of original thinking.

(6) And finally that all public examinations as they are conducted at present be abolished and their place be taken by a suitable combination of all the tests suggested above.

These suggestions are, of course, meant only as tentative, and indicative of the lines along which public attention might be focussed.

#### THE BIRTH-DAY ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT SAN FRANCISCO.

The sixty-third birthday of Swamiji was celebrated on the 18th January, at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California, U. S. A., with usual devotion, and two special services were conducted by Swami Prakashananda and Swami Prabhavananda.

At the eleven O'clock service, Swami Prakashananda spoke eloquently on the message of Swami Vivekananda bringing out beautifully the salient points of his teachings. Among others, he pointed out that the study of the life of this great apostle of universal religion would benefit the persons of all faiths and creeds and also those who did not belong to any denomination. He aimed at the spiritualisation of the whole human race.

The evening lecture was delivered by Swami Prabhavananda, the subject for discourse being Swami Vivekananda's contribution to the spiritual thought of the world. Clear was the tribute he paid to this great Acharya, and he nicely brought home to all the fact that humanity has been blessed to have lived to receive Swamiji's wonderful message.

The function came to a happy termination late at night.

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# Prabuddha Bharata

उचिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निधीयत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

*21st December, 1920.*

The Swami was explaining Maya. "It is an inscrutable principle, neither real nor unreal," said he.

He then referred to a saying of Sri Ramakrishna and remarked: "A man will be born as many times as there will be sex-connections. And in each of these births there is a great likelihood of having that connection over again. So there is the endless round of births and deaths. The only remedy against that is to take refuge in the Lord and give up that clinging to flesh with a firm determination saying 'I won't do it again.' In that case, all the sins done previously will be forgiven. But a person must not play the hypocrite. Then all the old sins will come down upon him and exact their dues with compound interest. A true devotee cannot have a permanent fall. Even if he falls, he is bound to rise again through the grace of the Lord. Eternal damnation !

Nonsense ! I do not believe it. God has His work done even by the apparent lapse of a devotee."

The conversation then turned to compassion and attachment. The Swami observed : "There is a gulf of difference between compassion and attachment. A Sadhu must have compassion and not attachment—the idea of 'me and mine', for that is the root of all bondage." The Swami illustrated the point by citing the example of Sri Ramakrishna's love for Swamiji and others and said : "The Master had a great attraction for Swamiji and others like him, for he could see a greater manifestation of Divinity in them than in others. He was fully conscious of that, so there was no fear of bondage in his case."

The Swami continued : "Even saints may slip and become bound, as for instance, Jada Bharat. Self-exertion is what is needed to snap through bondage. It is self-exertion that brings about quick results ; otherwise there is no knowing when the success will come. 'Last birth' means that one will realise God in this very life. Ignorance is without beginning, for one cannot trace its origin." And he explained what he meant by quoting Gaudapada.

Then the talk was about Sri Ramakrishna and his Sadhana, and the Swami observed : "Once Girish Babu put the question to the Master—'Why do you have so much practice of austerity? The Master replied : 'You know, there is eternal union of Hara with Gauri. Still why did Gauri practise so much Tapasya? All that was as an example to others. If I do so much, others will at least do one sixteenth part of it? Is not it?' "

Next the talk was about concentration and realisation, and the Swami said : "When the mind gets concentrated, the breath also becomes even. He who realises the Lord within, finds him without too."

*22nd December.*

The Swami was talking about Mahatma Gandhi, and he was eloquent in his praise of the man. Said he : "There is no doubt that Gandhi has reached Rishihood. Others

may not believe it, but *I do*. So far as I see, he is right all through his course. Just see the power of the man! Even the King has to admit the force of his words! It is not a matter of joke. It is truth that is revealing itself through Gandhi. The same truth we heard from Swamiji. Truth can never be the monopoly of any particular individual. It knows no time, clime or person. And Swamiji himself said that many times."

Then the conversation drifted to the topic of the supreme knowledge. The Swami said: "The words of supreme knowledge have no meaning for an ordinary man with a limited vision. Jada Bharat's discourse to the king Rahugan is an instance in point. Through discrimination the ordinary sense-knowledge vanishes. Take for example, this house. It is nothing but a conglomeration of atoms, so is the body. Discrimination pushed further will reduce even the atoms to one entity—the Absolute Existence. As Sri Ramakrishna would say: 'The palmyra tree is true and not its branches or fruits, for they drop off. Brahman alone is real; the world is changing. Taken as a whole, it is Brahman that comes to be true. Knowledge is, so long as ignorance is. In fact, when ignorance goes knowledge also vanishes with it. Knowledge is simply a means to an end and not the end itself. It is the Brahman alone that exists. When we say that Brahman is Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss we do not mean that Brahman is actually that, but that is its nearest approximation. Brahman is not untruth; it is not ignorance; it is not misery. To explain this, Brahman is described as Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. But, truly speaking, Brahman is beyond the reach of words and thought.

"There is a place even in this body, where the mind being pitched, one can perfectly be at ease. What is required is a change of the angle of vision. No escape from trials and difficulties by flying from them."

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## OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Elsewhere we publish an article entitled 'Mysticism' contributed by an English friend of ours. It proposes to be a criticism of that ineffable state of bliss which, on account of its inexplicability in terms of ordinary reason, goes by the name of mysticism. Though we substantially differ from the writer, we believe that his view of the matter has a value of its own. For, it represents the honest opinion about the subject of a class of thinkers, by no means inconsiderable, who try to understand the mystic phenomenon from a scientific standpoint. The writer, trained in the Western materialistic school of thought, has brought to bear upon the subject his knowledge of empirical science and philosophy and sought to give a seemingly rational estimate of the thing. Being a matter-of-fact man and judging things by their immediate utility, he has taken a pragmatic view of the mystical experience and declared its validity and usefulness in proportion to its workability in life. To substantiate his arguments, he has quoted the great pragmatic thinker, William James as also Schiller.

We have carefully gone through the article and weighed in the balance the pros and cons of the arguments introduced therein. What has struck us most is that while considering the relation of mysticism to religion in general, its claims to know truth and its value in life, the writer has confined his attention to that class of mysticism which is known as Vedantism. It is mainly the philosophy and religion of Vedanta upon which has fallen the brunt of his attack. Judged impartially and in the light of higher reason, the opinion set forth by the writer seems to be a one-sided representation of the case. The inferences drawn have been hasty and not strictly warranted by facts and logic. Of course, our friend does not go so far as to side openly with medical materialists

and taboo the ecstatic experience, calling it a 'suggested or imitated hypnoid state' which has its origin in a deep-seated intellectual superstition and physical degeneration. But what he means to say, though not in clear terms, is that the mystical state is an aberration and not a sign of health and vigour and that it should not be encouraged anywhere, specially in India.

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At the outset, he brings forward the charge that a mystic is 'obsessed by a constellation of highly emotionally-toned beliefs' and is 'supersensitive to criticism.' And he goes on to account for it by referring to the biological meaning religion has to man. Man is a gregarious animal. There comes a time in his life when he feels an overwhelming sense of incompleteness and impotence. To cover up this blank and limitation, he invents religion. Thus tracing the genesis of the religious consciousness, the writer explains how, with the growth and increasing complexity of the social life, this primitive instinct comes to be developed and acquires a show of rationalisation. For illustration, he refers to Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore, two mystic thinkers of our country and preachers of the Vedantic ideal, and he says that in their works one meets with the culmination of rationalisation forced upon the religious impulse. Next, the writer goes on to a consideration of the question as to how far the claim of the mystic to know truth can be recognised and what its value in life is, and he quotes from 'The Varieties of Religious Experience' by Prof. James who says—"If the mystical truth that comes to a man proves to be a force that he can live by, what mandate have we of the majority to order him to live in another way?" This means that mysticism has value if it works in life. In other words, its usefulness and validity are tentative and conditional.

Well and good! To recognise this much is quite sufficient for our purpose. But the writer goes further

and points out that the mystical state and the faith it generates do 'not always make for action—the positive side of life.' They 'cannot certainly be said to do so in Vedantism, that apotheosis of monism,' for Vedanta is 'the religion of the tender-minded section of humanity,' of men who are 'morally afraid, afraid of more experience, in short, afraid of life.' This picture of the origin and influence of the Hindu philosophy is indeed fanciful. In his book called 'Sadhana,' Rabindranath, whom the writer quotes, like a true poet, attributes the Vedantic conception to the special environmental conditions of India. According to him, the Hindus, living in the closest and most intimate intercourse with the beauties and sublimities of nature, very naturally developed the idea of a unity with the cosmos. But our friend tries to prove that this conception of unity is 'the outcome of an intense feeling of importance in the face of the vast natural calamities,' and he cites for his authority Meredith Townsend and Schiller. This pantheistic monism, as is wrongly supposed to be propounded by Vedanta, is, according to our friend, 'not only easy but specious.' "Whoever demands more, such as, for example, a moral order and a guiding and sympathising personality, will ultimately fail to get it from any theory that equates God with the totality of being."

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Next, to prove the unscientific character of all mystical faiths, in particular of Vedanta, the writer asserts that a mystic, truly speaking, is constitutionally incompetent to have a clear grasp of science. For, the mystical experience, along with it the obliteration of self that he aims at, is prejudicial to science, based as it is upon a state that is beyond the ordinarily recognised means of proof, such as perception and inference. Making a statement like this, our friend comes to the conclusion that all religions which have for their origin the mystical experience, are defective, and it is in Islam and Christianity which encourage the accumulation of experience and the conquest of external nature that one can find a

scientific conception of the world. Finally, the writer levels his invectives against the Hindu society, the cradle of mysticism, and tries to lay bare the wide divergence, as he thinks, between theory and practice obtaining there. This is the main outline of the objections put forth by the writer to refute mysticism, and he has tried to caricature it as best as he could. As it is beyond our scope to answer the objections severally, we shall try to remove the misconception as regards mysticism by trying to explain in a general way what it actually means as well as what its value is. Of course, we shall do this in the light of the Vedanta philosophy and religion that we uphold.

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The study of mysticism, both as a theory and practice, forms a science by itself. It is that science which enquires into the innate nature of the human soul—its struggles and the laws of its growth, and points to a supreme ideal to be realised by practising a systematic course of moral and spiritual discipline. The only difference between it and the positive naturalistic science of the West is that, whereas the latter aims at the conquest of nature without, the former has for its object the controlling of nature within. The science of mysticism is both a positive and a normative science. It stands on subtle psychological principles that hold good universally, and as such it may be called the logical development and the practical application, with reference to an ideal, of the analytical psychology of the West. Hence there can be no antagonism, as has been shown by our friend in the article, between science and mysticism. Because of the limited scope of our present day science, we have no right to dogmatise and say that mysticism is unscientific. It is quite as scientific as any other branch of knowledge, with the only distinction that those who are adepts in it are few and far between. In India this science has been specially studied, and even now there are men here who stand as witness to its truth and value in life.



Although there is a great difference of opinion as to the exact nature and scope of mysticism, all agree that it speaks of a state which opens up visions of things too subtle and at the same time too deep to be grasped by reason. That state, variously named by different mystic schools, is a state of supreme beatitude by getting which one feels that one has got everything. It is a state of the highest wisdom which dispels all doubts and solves the knottiest problems of existence. In short, it is a state which leads to the realisation of the summum bonum of life—of God, Truth or Self. This state, after which, consciously or unconsciously everyone is striving, is not always of the same kind and degree of intensity. With reference to the temperament of the man who has it and its influence in life, there are innumerable varieties and grades of it which it is beyond our scope and power to enumerate here. But with reference to the relation it bears to its content, we can roughly distinguish three stages of its growth. At the first stage, there is a clear dualism between the person having it and the ideal which he visualises. Next, as he advances in the scale of evolution, he feels that he is not separate from his ideal but is rather its part and parcel, and the previous relation of dualism becomes one of a unity in difference. Finally, there comes a stage of pure unity where all distinction of the aspirant and the object of aspiration is merged in one indivisible consciousness, engulfing everything. In Vedanta this state has been described as Samadhi where all differentiation and limitation vanish, and man realises his innate oneness with the Ultimate Reality and becomes supremely blessed.

This conception of the identity of the individual with the Universal to be realised by Samadhi as represented in Vedanta is based upon its metaphysical theory of Atman or Brahman, the One without a second, the Absolute Existence, Knowledge and Bliss and its doctrine of Maya. Man is potentially Divine. From the absolute standpoint he is one with Brahman, and there is no

duality or multiplicity. But on account of the fictitious superimposition of Maya, the inscrutable power of ne-science, he considers himself a being, subject to birth and death, pain and suffering, and such other limitations. The whole course of Sadhana prescribed is meant only for the removal of this apparent ignorance and the recognition of the essential nature of man. As it will not be possible for us to enter into details and establish the supreme validity of such a theory, we shall content ourselves with referring our friend, the writer, and the readers of the Prabuddha Bharata to the opinion on the subject of such eminent thinkers as Max Müller, Schopenhauer, Sir William Jones, Victor Cousine and F. Schlegel. They have spoken very highly of Vedanta, the synthesis and rationale of all philosophy and religion, and recognised its unique place in the foremost systems of philosophical thought. The problem of mysticism that we are discussing here is mostly concerned with the psychological aspect of Vedanta, and we would therefore go deeper into the psychology of the human mind as understood by it and explain the mystic state in that light.



Ordinarily, our mental life includes all those states and processes that come under the conscious and the sub-conscious. What the mind does with a corresponding awareness of the self as the subject is conscious, and what goes on below the threshold of consciousness is subconscious. The life of an average man is confined within these two planes, and he cannot easily transcend their boundaries. Instinct and intellect, including sensation, perception, thought, memory, feeling, will etc., furnish the materials of his knowledge, and he builds his idea about himself and the external world on them. But the conscious and the subconscious do not cover the whole range of man's experience, and there is a super-conscious state, vouchsafed to a few blessed souls, in which reality can be seen face to face. This exalted vision, giving the person who comes to have it, a scope for a richer, wider and higher experience, is the mystical

state, the subject-matter of our discussion. It is a state, the most covetable and enviable, as we have said. And there can be no doubt that to ignore it and limit the life of man to the conscious and the subconscious, is to omit the best part of it.

Unfortunately, the Western psychologists, while studying the mind—its operations, functions and laws, have stopped short at the conscious and subconscious and are quite in the dark about the superconscious. As we understand it, the superconscious or mystical state has nothing misty or mysterious about it, although it cannot be adequately decribed in terms of ordinary sense-perception or reason. The conscious, the subconscious and the superconscious form one continuous line, and there is no break or unbridgeable gulf separating one from the other. All three are grounded in one Supreme Consciousness, the Atman that pervades everything. The subconscious manifests itself as instinct and is present in animals and in men. Gradually it evolves and comes out as intellect or discursive reason, and it is civilised men who possess it to a degree. But, as we have said, the conscious life of man does not end here. It has infinite scope and possibility. It can be extended and enlarged indefinitely till it reaches a point where there is no limitation or barrier obstructing its vision. From that point begins what is known as the superconscious or the mystical plane. Thus interpreted the subconscious is nothing but reason involved, and the superconscious the culmination or fulfilment of reason.

'But how is it that a mystic is supersensitive and cannot tolerate criticism?' our friend would say. The reason is not far to seek. We shall understand his position, if we take into account the nature of the content of his experience. What is it that the mystic sees in his vision? It is either God, Truth or something like that connoting infinity, absoluteness or unconditionedness.

As such the content is inconceivable in terms of reason. In his 'Critique of Pure Reason,' Kant, one of the brightest luminaries in the history of Western philosophy, has enumerated the limitations of human reason and shown that time, space, causality etc., are not objective entities but subjective forms through which reason has to work. The 'thing in itself' or reality in its true nature independent of these forms is unknown and unknowable. The God revealed through reason is a phenomenal God, coloured and conditioned by all the limitations of reason. Following the same line of argument, Vedanta has described the Ultimate Reality by the negative process of 'this is not, this is not' (नेति नेति), for it is beyond speech and thought (अवाक्यगोचरम्). But the speciality of Vedanta is that it does not stop here and end in agnosticism like Kant. It discovers a supra-conscious state where there is immediate realisation of God free from the categories of reason.

Hence there is nothing strange if the mystic bolts and refuses to be judged and criticised in terms of ordinary reason. The so-called inferential proofs for the existence of God—the cosmological, teleological, ontological and moral proofs—have value only so far as they exhibit to us the train of thought by which we rise to a vague and approximate idea of Him and no further. They show the helplessness of reason to reveal God. But still if you persist in applying these arguments for proving His existence, you will inevitably be landed in an interminable series of contradictions and inconsistencies. Just as a man cannot overreach his shadow by any number of somersaults, reason also is constitutionally incapable of transcending its limitations. It is only after purifying or disciplining reason that one can get to the superconscious state and see God face to face and not before. Therefore the sensitiveness to criticism of which the mystic is accused is not altogether unjustifiable. Without being intolerant, all that the mystic can do is to invite his critics and ask them to go through the pres-

cribed practices and test for themselves the truth of the singular experience. Of course, it does not mean here that reason as such is altogether useless. It has its utility, for it prepares the way for and helps towards the attainment of the mystic state.



After considering what mysticism is, we shall conclude our discussion by noticing briefly its value in life. So far as we know, the mystical experience is the very foundation of all religious systems. Not only Vedanta, but almost all other religions, including Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, have for their basis this experience. To make real in life this ideal state has been the one aim of all spiritual aspirants, and the religious history of the world is replete with accounts of it which speak eloquently of its supreme importance, usefulness and validity. To belittle its value is to ignore the wonderful elevating influence exercised by religion. For, who can deny that but for religion the world would have gone to rack and ruin? Religion maintains order and keeps under control the disruptive forces of evil. A tree is known by its fruit. We know that the mystic state brings about a distinct moral and spiritual transformation in the life of an individual, uplifting him and befitting him with better equipments for the service of humanity, and we have no right to deny its value. It is a fact that a mystic, enlightened himself, creates about him an atmosphere of rare holiness, love, wisdom and joy, and those who come in contact with him feel distinctly the influence of his personality. Many a sinner who was given up for lost, has in this way been reclaimed. Therefore our friend, the writer, has to admit that 'there is no shadow of doubt that mysticism is capable in many cases of rendering the soul of man most energetic' and 'many mystics have rendered real and practical service to mankind.' But we are at a loss to understand what he means when he says in the same breath that mysticism 'does not make for action—the positive side of life. So far as our knowledge goes, we can say that the mystic

element is a dynamic factor and is the initiator of all those movements that have worked and are still working for the greatest good of humanity.

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Of all countries, it has been given to India, as we have said, to specialise in the science of mysticism, and her history shows that she has not failed to give a good account of herself in this line. India has ever been a land of saints and sages whose intuitional experiences as recorded in the sacred texts form a priceless contribution to the world's spiritual thought and culture. It is the Indian Rishi of old who could challenge humanity and declare with a voice of thunder :

**वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तम्**

**आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ।**

**तमेव विदित्वा तिमृत्युमेति**

**नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥**

—“I have realised that Mighty Being who is full of light and beyond the veil of ignorance. It is by knowing Him that one can conquer death. There is no other way of getting Immortality.” It is a bold challenge indeed! We believe and rightly so that the science of mysticism in which the people of India have been experts since the dawn of civilisation, will yet lead humanity and bring peace and harmony to this world, distracted by many conflicts of interests. There is nothing strange that, in this materialistic age when men are too busy chasing the ‘mighty dollar’ and evaluating life in terms of sense-enjoyment, Indian mystics should be looked down upon as madmen or nervous wrecks. But let India be true to herself and her national ideal, and truth will triumph in the end. Of course, it cannot be denied that in comparison to her past India has been very backward at present, and there is a wide divergence between the ideal and the life she is living. But it is not the preaching of

Vedanta, the philosophy of mysticism, that is responsible for it. The cause of degradation must be sought elsewhere.

## THE REVIVAL OF HINDUISM AND SWAMI DAYANANDA.

Physiologists and medical men declare that when any foreign body enters into an organism and threatens its very existence, all its protective forces manifest a tremendous activity to expel the foreign element or to render its malignant influence innocuous. This is not only true of individual organisms but of social groups as well. For, it is well-known that with respect to these two classes, sociologists have discovered many points of resemblance in the respective laws governing their nature, growth and decay. This truth finds a striking corroboration in the series of movements that are observable in the history of the Hindu community in India from the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is a familiar fact that with the coming of the British in India, the faith of the people in their religious ideals began to be shaken, thus striking a blow at the very root and vitality of the race. Hence we find the rise of a number of reformers, whose main object was to remove the excrescences and to rehabilitate the religious ideals of the community. Such names as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda will readily occur to the minds of our readers in this connection. It is to the working of this same tendency that we should attribute the founding of organisations like the Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Sanatana Dharma Sabha, the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, and, in quite recent times, the Hindu Mahasabha.

It is impossible to deal with all these movements in the space of a short article, and we shall, therefore, con-

fine our attention to the life and work of Swami Dayananda Saraswati. It was only this year that his centenary was celebrated, and his most important work viz. the Arya Samaj has also completed fifty years of its useful work. The present is therefore a fit occasion for a critical estimate of the part played by the Swami and his Samaj in bringing about changes and modifications in the religious and social outlook of the people. \* The main incidents in the life of the Swami are briefly these. Born in an orthodox Brahmin family in Kathiawad about 1824, initiated in the study of Sanskrit from early boyhood, and deeply impressed by the sudden death of his younger sister by cholera followed three years later by the demise of his learned and dearly beloved uncle, he breaks away from home and friends in quest of Yogis for knowledge and wisdom, and after a wandering of fourteen years, full of trials and adventures, finally reaches Muttra and finds peace at the feet of Swami Virajananda, a learned Sannyasin Pandit. \*

A few words about this famous Guru of Swami Dayananda would not be out of place here. He seems to have been a man of very strong likes and prejudices. He would teach none but the Arsha Granthas, and, for the rest, his only treatment was to cast them into the Jumna. One of the biographers of Dayananda writes thus—"But Virajananda was a stern Guru, and a man of irascible temper. Perhaps, long suffering had made him nervous and sour. A martyr to chronic dysentery, blind, old, decrepit, what mortal could be anything else? \* \* \* For a wiser head, a clearer insight, Virajananda had to pay the price of a keener sensibility, an extremely nervous temperament. \* \* \* Idolatry was none of his creed, nay, he would openly denounce it. For the Puranas he had nothing but contempt. And for the authors of Saraswat and Siddhanta Kaumudi he had an almost unbounded hatred. He would never receive a scholar who did not, as a preliminary test, write the name of the author on the ground, and beat it with his shoes."

For two years and a half, Dayananda studied under him persevering under very trying circumstances and



finally bade good-bye to his Guru, who, with much earnestness and feeling, charged his disciple 'to work for the welfare of humanity, to spread the true Vedic religion and to dispel the darkness of irreligion, superstition and ignorance.' The next twelve years were spent in visiting various places, holding discussions and exposing the superstitious folly of various meaningless ceremonies and practices. And in April, 1875, he laid the foundation of the Arya Samaj in Bombay. Although this is the most important of all his works, there is hardly any department of thought and life that he has not touched. The questions of free and compulsory education, female education, the cultivation of the vernaculars, the study of Sanskrit, the importance of Brahmacharya, adult marriage, widow remarriage, the elevation of the depressed classes, the caste-system, idolatry, vegetarianism, the rearing of healthy children, in short all things that concern a man from his cradle to the grave, were dealt with by him. In the orthodox terminology, it is a regular Smriti and Dharma Shastra that he has given to his countrymen. The questions like mass education, female education, widow remarriage and the elevation of the depressed classes were all emphasised by reformers before and after Dayananda. But his peculiar contribution is the Arya Samaj, to a consideration of which we shall now turn.▲

The principles of the Arya Samaj are as follows :—(1) God is the source of all true knowledge and of everything known by its means. (2) God is Truth, Knowledge and Bliss. He is Incorporeal, Almighty. Just, Merciful, Unborn, Infinite, Unchangeable, Beginningless, the Support of all, Lord of all, All-pervading, Controller from within of all, Eternal and Holy. He alone is entitled to be worshipped. (3) The Veda is the book of true knowledge. It is the first duty of every Arya to read it and to teach it to others, to hear it and to preach it. (4) Every Arya should always be ready to accept truth and renounce untruth. (5) All acts should be done according to Dharma, i.e. after a full consideration of right and wrong. (6) The primary object of the Arya Samaj

is to do good to the world by improving the physical, spiritual and social condition of all mankind. (7) In his conduct every Arya should be guided by love, righteousness and justice. (8) He should promote knowledge and dispel ignorance. (9) He should not be contented with his own welfare. On the contrary, he should look for his welfare in the welfare of others. (10) In matters affecting the well-being of society, the individual must subordinate his interests to the interests of community. In other matters, he is at liberty to look to his own interests.

The biographer quoted before, in the course of his estimate of the achievements of the Samaj, lays down the following—"If the Arya Samaj has any hobby—it is this that its religion is the best and that it is its duty to convert the whole world to its own religion. The heart of the Arya Samaj is sound enough. *If there is anything wrong, it is with him who suspects it.*"\* A noble hobby is it! This attitude is scarcely consistent with the principles just enumerated. It is tantamount to saying, 'my doxy is orthodoxy.' Nevertheless, we should do our duty and give expression to our honest views in the hope that the Arya Samaj brethren will take them in proper light. Excepting the principles, viz., a belief in one Supreme God and in the revealed nature of the Vedas, all the rest could be subscribed to by everybody irrespective of his religion or creed. And every Hindu believes in one Supreme God and in the revealed nature of the Vedas. What then is the peculiarity of the Samaj? Apparently, in its theory, so far as these principles go, it is not different from Hinduism. The biographer himself has raised the question whether a member seeking admission into the Arya Samaj is to subscribe only to the ten principles or to all the teachings of Swami Dayananda, and he answers it thus—"Whatever the intention of the framers of the principles might have been, the fact is that from the very first the Arya Samaj

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\* The Italics are ours.

has only been an organised body of the followers of the Swami. \* \* \* The religion of the Arya Samaj is the religion of the Vedas as interpreted by Swami Dayananda Saraswati."

We ask our readers to ponder over this strange fact. It is claimed that the Arya Samaj stands for truth and that its religion is the best and it is its duty to convert the whole world, and in the same breath, most unreasonably, it limits everything strictly within the interpretations of Swami Dayananda. If the Samajist loves truth and reason above everything else, how can he bear the severe bondage of the interpretations of one man, however learned and competent he might be? We could only hope that the view expressed by the biographer might not represent the true mentality of the best intellects of the Arya Samaj. So far the theoretical side of the Samaj. Turning to the practical side, we find that under its auspices schools and colleges have been founded, Gurukulas have been started to give education on national lines, and special efforts are being made for the education of girls and women. Pâthashallas for the propagation of Sanskrit study have been opened, orphanages have been established, many thousands of the depressed classes have been taken into the Samaj and schools provided for their benefit, and considerable progress has been achieved in the direction of popularising adult marriages and widow marriages. Special mention ought also to be made of the fact that the Samaj has given a commendable impetus to the revival and spread of the vernaculars. Add to this the fact that besides many libraries and tract societies, there are to the credit of the Samaj four English, nine Hindi and seven Urdu periodical publications. There are as many as 667 Samajs in the whole of India besides several in Burma, Straits Settlements and South Africa. Another noteworthy feature is the Samajs for ladies and that five journals are published in their interests. (These figures are of the year 1914.) For these and other progressive and beneficent activities of the Samaj, no amount of praise will be too much, and for our own part, we have

nothing but respect and admiration for the spirit of service which the Samajists are showing. We have intentionally refrained from including the Prachar work of the Samaj in the above list of its beneficent activities, and we shall now turn to a consideration of its views on idolatry and caste-system, in which directions mainly it is carried on.

Arya Samajist writers, whenever they talk of idolatry, use most violent and unmeasured language.<sup>1</sup> We should not trouble our readers with repeating samples of them but content ourselves with one or two mild specimens. A prominent Samajist calls it a worship of stocks and stones. Another characterising it as the preference of log-worship to God-worship writes thus—"We, moreover, think idolatry to be a most degraded form of worship, unworthy of the Great Father and the enlightened soul alike, fit only for the lowest type of men, such as form only the connecting link between the man and the brute. Them we may leave to worship logs and stones even as the Bhils and Santals do to-day." In the first place, we deem it our duty to raise a most emphatic protest against the unmitigated contempt and slander of the Bhils and Santals. We challenge the Arya Samajists to produce any text or passage from any of the Hindu scriptures including the Puranas, the Tantras, etc., to show that it teaches worship of *stocks, stones, logs*, etc. Our next challenge to them is to bring forward at least one single instance of a Hindu, including the Bhils, Santals etc., who, while worshipping the image, addresses his prayers and offerings to the stone, stock or log *as such*. Has any Arya Samajist ever heard such words as—"O stone, O log, I bow to you, I pray to you, grant me such and such etc."? What is the warrant for the Arya Samajist's assumption that in worshipping the images the Hindus offer their homage to stocks and stones? This has been the cant of the Christian Missionaries in their criticism of the 'Heathen Hindu,' born of ignorance, prejudice and perversion. But what takes our breath away is the unpardonable parrot-like

repetition of these shibboleths by the Arya Samajists, who ought to know better.

At the memorable session of the Parliament of religions at Chicago in the year 1893, in his paper on Hinduism and on other platforms, the Swami Vivekananda nailed to the counter many of the Christian Missionaries' libels and lies like idolatry, throwing of babes into the Ganges etc. Referring to idolatry, says he—"My brethren, we can no more think about anything without a mental image than we can live without breathing. By the law of association, the material image calls up the mental idea and *vice versa*. This is why the Hindu uses an external symbol when he worships. He will tell you it helps to keep his mind fixed on the Being to whom he prays. He knows as well as you do that the image is not God, is not omnipresent. After all how much does omnipresence mean to almost the whole world? It stands merely as a word, a symbol. Has God superficial area? If not, when we repeat that word omnipresent, we think of the extended sky or of space, that is all. \* \* \* The Hindus have associated the ideas of holiness, purity, truth, omnipresence and such other ideas with different images and forms. But with this difference that while some people devote their whole lives to their idol of a church and never rise higher, because with them religion means an intellectual assent to certain doctrines and doing good to their fellows, the whole religion of the Hindu is centred in realisation. Man is to become Divine by realising the Divine. Idols or temples or churches or books are only the supports, the helps, of his spiritual childhood. But on and on he must progress."

Lest anybody should think this external worship to be everything, it is pointed out by the Swami that according to the Vedas—"External or material worship is the lowest stage. Struggling to rise high, mental prayer is the next stage, and the highest stage is that where the Lord has been realised." Although image worship is but a stage in man's attempt to realise his Divine nature, nobody who has passed the stage has a right to call it

an error. According to the Hindus, 'man is not travelling from error to truth but from truth to truth, from lower to higher truth.' Another great truth which the Hindu has recognised and made provision for is that 'the plan of nature is unity in variety.' It is wrong to lay down certain fixed dogmas and try to force all to adopt them.

We have devoted much space to the question of idolatry as it is one of the most vital points of difference between the Hindus and the Arya Samajists. It is too much to hope that the Arya Samajists will be convinced of this truth, but they ought at least to realise that their view of the matter is neither correct nor the only possible one, and that a good deal could be said against it. While we have been defending image worship on principle as not only harmless but necessary and helpful as well, in some cases and conditions, we are well aware that priests, Pandas and charlatans do occasionally impose upon the ignorant and gullible pilgrims. We also admit that in the name of religion some cheats and rogues thrive and carry on a flourishing trade in lies and superstitions. These and other abuses have, no doubt, crept into the religion of the Hindus. And which religion in the world is free from such abuses? But the remedy is surely not vilification and vituperation but a patient, slow and steady attempt to educate the ignorant.

*(To be continued.)*

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## MYSTICISM.\*

Within the last year the attention of the public has been directed towards the writings of India's latest mystic, Mr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, so that, when the Nobel prize for literature was conferred upon him, a large number of people, who had been previously only attracted by the literary merit of his work, appeared to be suddenly seized with the notion that something in the nature of a renaissance in Hindu philosophy had come into being.

Reviews, criticisms and extracts of Mr. Tagore's works appeared in journals throughout Europe, Asia and America, and all shades of opinion were expressed upon them, varying from the somewhat unctuous eulogies of "The Daily Chronicle" to the lampoons of "Simplificissimus".

Not since Swami Vivekananda visited Europe and America has so much attention been bestowed on that particular variety of mysticism, usually known as Vedantism, and referred to by Schiller as that ἀμενῆνὰ κάρηνα of imperfectly personified gods fused into one vast power which pervades the universe.

To many Europeans the mere words "mysticism" and "mystical" connote terms of reproach, and Max Nordau in his "Degeneration" seeks to explain the causation of mystical states of consciousness by attributing them to some form of mental degeneration.

To the medical mind the ecstatic states of mystics signify nothing but suggested or imitated hypnoid states, on an intellectual basis of superstition and a corporeal one of degeneration and hysteria. As William James observes in his "Varieties of Religious Experience": "Pathological conditions of consciousness have existed

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\* It seems that the writer has wholly misrepresented 'mysticism.' The reader may refer to the 'Occasional Notes' of this number where we have tried to explain the mystic state and vindicate its position and validity from the standpoint of Vedānta.—Ed., P. B.

in many and possibly in all cases, but this fact tells us nothing about the value for knowledge of the consciousness which they induce. To pass a spiritual judgment upon these states, we must not content ourselves with superficial talk but enquire into their fruits for life".

To tell a mystic that his desire for completion, for mystical union, for incorporation with the Infinite, has a perfectly obvious and demonstrable basis is to offer him an affront.

He will assure you that mystical truths are beyond reason, they are intuitive. They exist for the individuals who have the transport but for no one else.

To attempt an explanation of the superconscious state which the Vedantists insist can only be attained after years of persevering training, according to the Indian mystic, is not only wicked but senseless.

One of the more ecstatic admirers of Mr. Tagore, Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri who has written a short sketch of the poet's life and an appreciation of his works, protests against the "exclusive and absurd worship of scientific methods", as only a mystic can and will do.

This supersensitiveness to criticism which characterises all persons who are obsessed by a constellation of highly emotionally-toned beliefs, religious, political or otherwise, is understandable and pardonable in mystics as soon as we realise the intense biological significance of religion to man.

Religion in man is the outcome of a deeply ingrained need of his mind. For, since man is an individual of a gregarious species, he must necessarily experience an abiding sense of incompleteness. Therefore to fill up the "gaps" of his life and to render the feeling of isolation less unbearable, man invented religion. And as his ideas developed, his religion came to be expressed in more and more abstract terms, so that in the extreme complexity of modern society this primitive instinct can only be satisfied with correspondingly elaborate expressions of rationalisations.

In the works of Swami Vivekananda and Rabindra Nath Tagore, we are witness to what lengths of ration-



alisation may be forced the consequences of that yearning in man, which is "identical with the mechanism that binds the wolf to the pack, the sheep to the flock, and to the dog makes the company of his master like walking with God in the cool of the evening".

Thus, Mr. Ramaswami Sastri writes: "No one can understand Tagore well who has not heard the beating of India's heavenly heart, who has not yearned to kiss the lotus of the Bharata-Mata, who has not tried to realise, in some measure, in his innermost heart, the ideals of universal love and spiritual rapture which India has been teaching the world from the dawn of time".

Having now realised the relation that mysticism bears to religion in general, we may proceed to the question as to how far the claims of mystics to know "truth" are recognisable, and then to a consideration of the value, from a pragmatic standpoint, of mystical faith as it exists in India to-day.

The claims of mystics in the matter of authoritative-ness of their "truths" have been carefully examined and pronounced upon by William James in his "Varieties of Religious Experience", so that there remains very little else to be said on this point. James says: "If the mystical truth that comes to a man proves to be a force that he can live by, what mandate have we of the majority to order him to live in another way?" James very clearly shows that there is no shadow of doubt that mysticism is capable in many cases of rendering the soul of man most energetic along the lines favoured by the inspiration, so that many mystics have rendered real and practical service to mankind.

Nevertheless, the mystic state of consciousness and the "faith" that it engenders, cannot be said invariably to make for action—the positive side of life. It certainly cannot be said to do so in Vedantism, that apotheosis of monism, where separation, with all its attendant difficulties, is not simply overcome by the one, but its very existence is denied! Such a conception as this affords, as James points out, "a perfect sumptuousness of security". This is the faith *par excellence* of the "tender-

mind" section of humanity. It is also the religion for those who are bewildered and frightened by the endless round of adventures of finite existence. It is the religion of men reduced to their last sick extremity, of men who are morally afraid, afraid of more experience, in short, afraid of life.

In his book entitled "Sadhana", Mr. Tagore indulges in a somewhat fanciful picture of the origin of Hindu philosophy. He attributes the conception of unity which characterises the aspirations of the Hindu soul to the fact that the first Aryan invaders of India dwelt "surrounded by the vast life of nature.....fed and clothed by her.....in the closest and most constant intercourse with her varying aspects." Thus they became instinctively enamoured of the idea of man's unity with the cosmos, which led not only to the formulation of the conception of a fundamental unity of nature, but to the feeling that the life-object of man is the realisation of this great harmony. Hence the essence of Hinduism is "to be" rather than "to have".

It is much more likely, only much less poetic, to suppose, that the development of a religion that imparts "a perfect sumptuousness of security" to its adherents, was the outcome, not of a desire to realise the unity of man with nature, but of an intense feeling of impotence in the face of vast natural calamities. As Meredith Townsend remarks: "In Asia everything is immoderate. A forest covers kingdoms, a river deposits a county in a decade. In Asia famine and disease have swept off thousands where in Europe they have only destroyed hundreds".

In Asia consequently man grows feeble from an abiding sense that nature is too strong for him, while in Europe, having less portentous powers to combat, man has been tempted to pit his strength against nature, with the result that the European has subdued nature to a degree to which the Asiatic would not only never aspire, but would consider it impious to attempt!

What is more natural for a primitive race appalled by the stupendous difficulties with which it was con-

fronted in its initial struggle for existence than to seek for help and protection through propitiation of natural forces? Later on, when life became a little less difficult and a little more secure, thought developed, and the multitude of discrepant deities that had sprung from this idea were gradually fused into one. This sort of pantheistic monism is, moreover, not only easy but, as Schiller observes, specious. "At the various stages of its development it seems capable of satisfying all man's needs ; to the end it satisfies one craving of only perhaps the most reflective souls. Whoever conceives religion as nothing more than an emotional appreciation of the unity of the universe may rest content with pantheism and even derive from its obliteration of all difficulties the most delirious satisfaction. Whoever demands more, such as, e.g. a moral order and a guiding and sympathising personality, will ultimately fail to get it from any theory which equates God with the totality of being. A mighty effort of clear and persistent thinking is needed to perceive these imitations ; and, scientifically at first, pantheism seems adequate enough." It needs a very clear grasp of the nature of science to perceive that the one is as useless scientifically as it is morally, because a principle which explains everything, whether it be called "God" or "the devil", or conceived as the "higher synthesis" of both, really explains nothing. If, however, we seem to ourselves to have reached the conviction that the one thing really worth the toil of knowing is that all is "Brahman" or "the Absolute", and that plurality is but phenomenal illusion, why should we trouble laboriously to unravel the intricate web of a multitude of partial processes, to study the relations of a multitude of partial beings as if they were real and important and independent, and as if anything they could do or suffer could in any wise affect the absolute and immutable truth of the one reality?

No real Indian mystic can ever have this "clear grasp of the nature of science", for monistic pantheism is prejudicial to science. Thus, he is for ever prevented from seeing the palpable weak places in the reasonings

he uses and protects himself from his own criticism as well as from that of others by a mystical feeling that, logic or no logic, absolute oneness must somehow at any cost be true. Besides the antagonism which monism displays towards science, it also engenders a singular indifference towards the accumulation of experience—that faculty which has enabled the adherents to a pluralistic conception of the world, e.g. Islam and Christianity, to formulate a whole series of exact sciences and thereby to make great conquests over the forces of nature.

Nothing demonstrates the essential futility of the Vedanta philosophy so completely as the fact that in spite of the insistence on a universal Oneness, the first preoccupation of a Hindu is to keep his caste, his separateness, his ceremonial purity, from any contact with any other equally separate division. We speak of Hindu society as "divided into castes", but it is, and always has been, divided into far more minute divisions, each in a way complete, but each absolutely separate from its neighbour by rules, laws, prejudices, traditions and principles of ceremonial purity. Enough has now been said to shew that the mystical synthesis of phenomenal experience is lacking in cogency, it is imaginative and conjectural. As Schiller remarks: "It is the ideal completion of an image of reality which is rough-hewn and fragmentary. Hence these spirits, craving for an ideal completion and confirmation of knowledge by a metaphysical construction, must abate their pretensions. They must renounce the pretence of building what is universal, and eternal, and objective, and compulsory and 'valid for intelligence as such'. It is surely the most sinister and fatal abstractions to abstract from the variety of individual minds, in order to postulate a universal substance in which personal life is obliterated, because you are too ignorant or too indolent to cope with its exuberance".

## MAHARANI SARAT SUNDARI OF PUTHIA.

BY AN ADMIRER.

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear ;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness in the desert air."

In the early days of my boyhood oftentimes I found old folks talk with bated breath about 'Rani' Sarat Sundari of Puthia, a place in the Rajshahi Division (Bengal). They would set her up before their daughters and sisters as an ideal woman of sterling character and rare generosity. They would say, "See, the Rani is a young widow, but how chaste ! Strictly she observes all the rules of widowhood. Though rich, she sleeps on the ground with only a blanket and a cotton sheet for her bed." If during this talk some one would say, "She is rich, but not liberal," others would at once intervene and reply, "No, no, she is liberal too. Only her charities are made in strict secrecy." In recounting the good qualities of this lady the old people would sometimes wax eloquent. I remember how my mind soared high with them and was filled with joy at the thought that India, the land of Sita, Savitri and Damayanti, was not yet sterile, for she still produced such womanhood as Rani Sarat Sundari.

Little did I dream at the time that later in life I would visit her place and my heart would be filled with still greater delight as I would hear more and more about her doings and actions, her feelings and sympathies. Indeed, her forbearance knew no bounds, her love was beyond question unique. She herself was educated and liked very much that education should spread amongst her sex. Her religious tolerance was too high to be expected from a lady in those days.

She became a widow at the early age of thirteen and came into possession of a big Zemindari. How skilfully she managed her estate would be well understood

when it is known that the Government refused politely to take it under the management of the Court of Wards, though she, of her own accord, offered to hand it over to them. The Government's courteous reply was, "The Court of Wards does not exist to take over charge of estates from such an able and efficient Zemindar as yourself."

I heard the old folks style her as 'Rani.' But now I come to learn that she was a 'Maharani.' During a severe famine, due to flood, in and about her village, she sheltered the homeless, fed the hungry and clothed the destitute. She also saved the lives of thousands of cattle by providing shelter and supplying fodder secured from distant quarters.

During my short stay at Puthia, my attention was first drawn to her Library. I heard she had had a special liking for it and had read most of the books and magazines collected therein. Many of the books are rare at present. I am sorry to remark that the collections, so valued by her once, are in a neglected state now.

My visit being short, I had not, though I wished, much time to mix with all the people at Puthia and collect facts about her life. But a few incidents that I could gather interested me much, and I give them below. I hope that will be enough to show the reader what rare stuff this good lady was made of.

The Maharani was the daughter of a well-to-do Zemindar, Srijut Bhairab Nath Sanyal of Puthia. She was married to Raja Jogendra Narayan Roy of the senior branch of the Puthia Raj family. As said before, she became a widow at a very tender age. Her chief officials, considering the opulent circumstances in which she was brought up, as also the rich family in which she was married, met together to make a list of the most dainty dishes, made from milk, butter and ghee for her daily diet. Now a milkman, as old as her grandfather, and who had been very familiar with her from her very birth, had been watching with keen interest the proceedings of the officials. When they read out to the Maharani, who had been listening behind a Purdah, the

list they had so elaborately made, the milkman, all on a sudden and most impudently, asked them to round up the list by putting on it a Tamasika meat preparation forbidden to be taken by Brahmacharins and Brahmacharinis. The Dewan and his under officers were all afire at this bold insolence of the man and thought of a very heavy punishment for him. The poor fellow, however, though blunt in his speech, meant only good to the lady in question. The Maharani, when she came to know that the milkman by his blunt speech, only meant to convey how she, so young a widow, would be able to fight the baser passions if she fed on such rich diet, not only forgave the fellow, but took lesson from his words and observed strict austerities throughout the rest of her life.

Once a very big law-suit cropped up between the Natore and the Puthia Raj families in connexion with a certain property. When the Maharani Mata came to know that the loss of the suit on the part of the Natore Raj meant ruin to that family, she became very agitated in her mind. The officials, saying that, as she was entrusted with the charge of the Zemindari, she should go on with the case as a matter of principle, prevailed upon her to conduct it. But her heart was touched, and she could get no rest. Giving her consent most unwillingly to conduct the suit, she repaired at once to the temple of her family god, Sri Govindaji, wept and prayed most fervently that she might lose the case and promised an offer of a Bhog, in case it came about as she desired. Her prayers were heard ; she lost the case and offered the Bhog as promised. She actually felt much relieved and was joyful at the loss of this contested law-suit which saved the Natore Raj from ruin.

Being herself a girl-widow, the Maharani felt a great sympathy for all those who were as unfortunate as herself. She kept a large number of such widows with her, paying them monthly stipends, meeting all their needs and serving them in various other ways. Oftentimes she was seen to read out to them from religious books for hours together. She helped them in preparing their food

with her own hands and herself prepared and took her meals always after theirs. Some of these widows were very quarrelsome and at times insolent to a degree. But like an affectionate mother she patiently bore with their weaknesses.

One day a ripe jack-fruit was presented to her by a tenant. She ordered it to be distributed amongst her widows. Now, when the distribution was being made one of these ladies had gone out to take her bath. After giving others five flakes each, to the share of this lady fell only four. This share was kept apart in her absence, on a leaf, near the Maharani Mata, who had then sat down to her daily worship. When the lady returned and found that she had a flake less than the others, she was very cross. At once she took up the flakes in her hand and threw them straight at the Maharani Mata, thundering forth as she did so, "Five flakes for others and only four for me! Take these flakes also. I don't want any." It so happened that these flakes, thrown at her by this angry lady, struck the *Shiva-Linga* she was worshipping and overturned it. The Maharani Mata saw that some injustice had been done to this lady, spoke an angry word or two to the maid-servant who had served and sat down to her worship afresh, without speaking a single word of reproach to the lady in question.

On another occasion another of these widowed ladies, who was well-known for her rough temper, left a gourd in a room and went out on some work. On returning she saw that a good portion of the vegetable had been cut off and taken away by somebody. At this she flew into a violent rage and taking up the remaining portion of the vegetable ran to the Maharani Mata and threw it towards the place where she had sat down to dine. The vegetable fell into her plate and spoiled her dinner. But the Maharani was calm, called to her the maid-servants and said, "You all know her temper. Still why do you tease her by taking things belonging to her?" She left her seat and went without dinner that day.

When her son was married, all the ladies of the locality as well as her relatives and acquaintances from



distant parts were assembled in the palace. In the darkness of nightfall, as she was passing by a corridor, overlooked by a two-storied building, something like a small bundle fell upon the garments of the Maharani Mata. On looking into it closely it was found to contain some filth and rubbish. Some stranger lady must have thrown it down from upstairs, not knowing the proper place where to deposit it, nor noticing that the Maharani was passing that way. At this incident there was a great uproar amongst her retainers. They began to heap abuse on the unknown thrower of the filth and set about a vigorous enquiry to find out the culprit. On seeing this the Maharani called to her the retainers and spoke to them in a mild tone, "Why are you making such a great row over this trifling incident? The person who has done it, must have already been mortified at the mistake. Let the matter drop here, and make no more fuss about it."

When the Maharani Mata sat down to her daily worship, many of the widows also sat around her for the same purpose. One day it so came about that one of these widows, while sprinkling water about her head during the process of worship, happened to sprinkle drops of it on the body of one who bore a grudge against her. The offended lady took it ill and thought of avenging herself for this supposed wrong done to her. She threw her Kusi, a copper instrument for offering oblations of water, aiming to hit her enemy, but as the Maharani Mata's seat was between them, it struck the latter's forehead which began to bleed in consequence. The Maharani Mata took no notice of the incident and went on with her worship without budging an inch from her seat. When she had finished it, she simply exclaimed, addressing the lady who was the target of this missile, "Fortunately it did not hurt you, or it would have caused you a great pain." She was quite silent after these few words and did not open her lips again.

The Maharani of Natore, when she was a mere girl, went in company of a few relatives to the Maharani Mata one morning. The Maharani Mata made certain gifts to

these ladies and approaching this fine looking girl, asked her in an affectionate tone, "What would you accept, my pretty girl?" To this she promptly replied, "Only blessings from you, so that I may also become a Maharani like you some day." "So be it, my sweet girl. May the Almighty so grant it!" were the words of blessing uttered by her. It is, of course, needless to add, as it is evident from the title given to her above, that the blessings of the Maharani Mata were literally fulfilled, and the girl became the Maharani of Natore by her marriage.

Once a certain poor Brahmin came to her Cutchery to beg money for his daughter's marriage. One of her principal officers, Srijut Ananda Mohan Sarkar was then in office. He told the Brahmin that the funds were very short and he could get only Rs. 10/- as help and nothing more. The poor man was greatly dejected at this and would not accept them. He had cherished a great hope that he would get a lump sum from the Maharani. One of the petty officers, seeing this pitiable plight of the poor man, took compassion upon him and whispered into his ears, "Why have you come here and not sent your petition to the Maharani Mata direct?" "How am I to do it?" he asked. "Just go downstairs and wait. When a maid-servant comes out, send your petition through her." The Brahmin did as he was advised. He had not waited long when a maid-servant appeared from the inner apartments, and he took the earliest opportunity to hand over to her the petition with a full description of the most wretched circumstances he was in for want of money to marry his daughter. The Maharani Mata read his petition and heard from the maid all that he had said. Her heart was touched with pity. She sent word to the Brahmin through the maid that she was sorry that she could not make an adequate monetary help as the state of her funds would not allow it. So she ordered the Sarkar Mahashay to pay Rs. 200/- only. The maid-servant accordingly handed over the order to the officer concerned. The Sarkar Mahashay was very angry and told the Brahmin that as there was no money in the treasury the order could not be carried out. He must

accept Rs. 10/- as previously offered or go away without anything. The poor man was very much perplexed and did not know what to do. He was at last going away without receiving a single pice when he was accosted by the same maid-servant and asked if he had received the ordered sum. Upon this he related to her the whole affair. Asking him to wait outside, the maid carried this message to the Maharani Mata. She was much distressed at hearing this. Taking out one of her ornaments from her box, she sent it to the Sarkar Mahashay and asked him to send it to a pawnbroker, borrow Rs. 200/- from him and pay the sum to the poor Brahmin, adding, "When funds will be available in the treasury, the ornament may be released and returned to me." The Sarkar Mahashay was nonplussed in this way and at once paid the desired sum from the Raj treasury.

In a similar case as the above the Maharani ordered Rs. 500/- to be paid to another poor Brahmin petitioner. Srijut Ananda Mohan Sarkar or Banu Sarkar as he was generally called, before paying it to the Brahmin, sent it in a purse through a maid to be poured out before the Maharani Mata for her to see how large a sum five hundred rupees made, so that in future she might reflect a little before ordering such large sums for charity whenever applied for. But such was the magnanimity of the Maharani Mata that she, on seeing it, exclaimed, "How can the poor Brahmin manage his daughter's marriage with so few coins? Just tell the Sarkar Mahashay to add a further sum of Rs. 500/- to it. When the poor Brahmin has come to me for help, why should he be made to go knocking about from door to door for this single affair?"

Later on some misunderstanding had grown between the Maharani Mata and Srijut Ananda Mohan Sarkar, although the latter was a staunch well-wisher of her estate. The estate had become a little encumbered owing to very large sums being spent in connection with the Kumara's marriage celebration and the famine relief referred to in the beginning. This able officer would always grudge at the extravagance of her charity and try

to put a check upon her unbounded generosity. The Maharani Mata, on the other hand, would burst into tears whenever she could not give an adequate help to people in distress. Thus there was a constant tussle between this officer and the Maharani Mata. But in her heart of hearts she always cherished a regard for his unimpeachable faithfulness and strict honesty.

*(To be continued.)*

# “THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF ANCIENT INDIA.”\*

A nation, fallen in evil days and sunk in a state of decadence, generally looks to its past for hope and inspiration, so that it may spring up from its degraded condition and make the future brighter and more glorious. India, now losing all confidence in her national ideal and pushed back in the march of progress, can gain strength and vigour, if she thinks of the proud position she once held in an age, thousands of years before Christ, when the modern civilised nations of the West were in their infancy or were not even born. Of course, it is true that too much looking to the past and dreaming of the glories of forefathers without any self-assertion and struggle can do little or no good. But it cannot also be denied that a nation which has no past or, having it, does not justly feel proud of it, is on the verge of death.

In this age of renaissance when humanity is pulsating with a new life all over the world, it is, indeed, a happy sign of the time that India also is trying to assert herself and retrieve her lost glory. As one of its indications, we notice vigorous researches and investigations going on throughout the country, and they are throwing a new light into the pages of the history of ancient India. The present volume, “The Economic History of Ancient India,” has been a new and invaluable addition to the

\* By Prof. Santosh Kumar Das, M.A. Published by the author from 5/2, Ananda Dutt Lane, Howrah. Pp. 311. Price Rs. 3/-.

works published regarding the Aryan civilisation in India. The author has, by his stupendous labour and wide study, attempted to find out the exact economic condition of ancient India, showing its gradual evolution from the palæolithic period down to the age of Harsha. Many interesting facts have been revealed in the book, and they are likely to serve as an eye-opener to many. The search-light of investigation thrown on a dark chapter of history does not always give sure results. But Prof. Das has spared no pains to get at the real truth. To substantiate his views, he has very often quoted available authorities on the subject. But wherever he differs, he has put forward his own opinion backed by good reasonings. Though some of his conclusions seem to have been arrived at from insufficient data, the book, on the whole, shows the remarkable sholarship as well as the critical spirit of the author.

Living in the heyday of civilisation and enjoying all the imaginable pleasures of life with external nature at our beck and call to administer to every comfort that we need, we can hardly picture to ourselves the keen struggles for existence the primitive man had to undergo. Not that the primitive man lived in an eternal paradise like the garden of Eden, free from all bodily wants and in perfect bliss, but he had to fight, from day to day, the forces of nature for self-preservation and defence. The history and the process—how man, from the primitive stage living akin to nature as her own child, ultimately evolved into a being with multifarious needs—are themselves very interesting. In the palæolithic age, man lived by hunting or fishing, and for weapons he depended on sticks and stones and bones. In the neolithic age, he began to use stone weapons and utensils as well as pottery works. Besides, he domesticated animals and discovered the process of cultivation. In the next stage, as he began to learn the use of metals, the stone implements were superseded by iron or copper ones. Again, as he passed from the pastoral to the agricultural stage and various crops were grown, there gradually arose a

need for exchange or barter, and thus was sown the seed of commerce and industry.

If we look into the history of ancient India, what strikes us most is her great commercial and industrial development even in that dim antiquity. In the Rig Vedic period, (which according to the great orientalist, Winternitz, whom the author has accepted, begins from the third millenium, though Tilak, Jacobi and other reputed scholars place the date much earlier) there were many highly developed industries, and there are proofs that "maritime trade was carried on with Babylon, Assyria, Elam, Judæa, Egypt and Arabia." Though there is a difference of opinion on the point, Prof. Das has borne out his theory by ample facts and evidences. The trade on the eastern shores was, however, of comparatively later growth. From some passages in the Ramayana, it has also been shown that there was communication between India and the countries of Java, Sumatra and China, and the chief article of trade with China was silk. From this it follows naturally that sea-voyages were not only not forbidden in ancient times but undertaken frequently by the people. "People crossed the main not only for trade but also for pleasure-trips and warlike purposes." Consequently, the art of ship-building received a great impetus in those days. In the Rig Veda we hear of "a ship with 100 oars." Again when we come down to the period, some centuries later, we find mention of "a ship which accommodated 1,000 families of wood-wrights"—one which "was propelled by 700 crews," and a ship "which was 800 cubits in length." The brisk trade with so many lands overseas would necessarily imply the existence of a good system of exchange and currency and of merchants' associations and crafts-guilds on organised scales, the history of which can be found in the book.

It is natural that the increase in the volume of trade would add to the national wealth of the country, and in time the fabulous "wealth of Ind and gorgeous East" passed into proverbs. At first the wealth of a person consisted in the number of cows and other live-stock he would

have, but afterwards with the use of metals it consisted in gold, silver etc. and finally, with the development of currency, in coins. In the Rig Veda there is the mention of a gift of 100,000 kine. In the Brahmana period "we hear of the liberality of a worshipper who gave 85,000 white horses, 10,000 elephants and 80,000 slave girls adorned with ornaments to the Brahmins." Subsequently in the age of Gautama Buddha, there is no mention of a "merchant who was less than 80 crores, which, even if copper, would amount to £27,500,000."

Among the crafts that were developed in India before the Christian era were "ivory-work, tanning, weaving, confectionery, pottery, garland-making, head-dressing and jewellery." The art of manufacturing paper was not unknown, and the metal industry was highly specialised.

Time buries up all defects. The memories of the past generally come to us with such a hallowed tint that we can hardly find any dark spot in it. But if we scrutinise impartially the history, we find that people even in those good old days had their woes and sufferings. In spite of the great wealth of the country, people sometimes suffered from famines and scarcity. The Rig Veda mentions of famines having overtaken the country and prayers offered to the gods for them. Though in the time of Rama the people were free from scarcity of food, famines were not altogether unknown in the age of the Ramayana. The Buddhistic scriptures contain passages which show that there were famines in the Buddhistic period, sometimes due to drought and sometimes to flood, extending over a whole kingdom.

As to the existence of slavery, the author differs from the Greek travellers who say that it was unknown in ancient India. Even in the age of Gautama Buddha, according to him, "the slave was an adjunct in all households able to command domestic service." But the slavery in ancient India was free from all the horrors that the word brings in its association. "The lot of the slave was far better than that of either the Greek or the Roman slave."

The book also gives us an interesting account of the

origin, growth and evolution of the caste-system in relation to the mobility of labour—how from an economic necessity as a division of labour it has grown into an institution with the cast-iron rigidity of the present day and lying as a dead weight upon society. At first, the castes were elastic. Any one of a higher caste could take to the occupation of a lower caste in time of stress and difficulty, and the strict rule enjoining the son to follow the calling of the father was unknown. But with the process of time, some occupations were deemed lower and some higher, till there arose water-tight barriers between the castes. The Buddhistic influence, to some extent, is held responsible for the fact that agriculture is now entirely left in the hands of the Sudras. "For, the ploughing of land, in which action worms and insects are inevitably killed, was gradually looked upon as sinful with the Buddhist spirit of aversion to the taking of life." In the age of Harsha, for the first time, we hear of the "existence of untouchables, who are now called the Panchamas or the fifth class," though Fa Hian referred to a class of Chandalas, "who were obliged to live apart and were required, when entering a town or bazaar, to strike a piece of wood as a warning of their approach in order that other people might not be polluted by contact with them."

Besides all these, the book reveals many other interesting facts. From start to finish, it is an illuminating and profitable study. Unfortunately some errors of printing have crept into its pages, and we think it would have been better if the quotations from Sanskrit works were given in Devanagari characters for the advantage of the non-Bengali readers.

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA.

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## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from p. 232.)

यमादिभिर्योगपथैरान्वीक्षित्या च विद्यया ॥

ममाचोपासनामिवा नान्यैर्योग्यं स्मरेन्मनः ॥ २४ ॥

24. The mind should think of the Paramatman with whom union is sought, through the path of Yoga comprising Yama etc., or through logical analysis,<sup>1</sup> or through the worship and meditation etc. of Me,—but by no other means.

[<sup>1</sup> *Logical analysis*: Reflecting on the true meaning of *Tat-tvam-asi* or Thou art That, by eliminating respectively the ideas of Ishvara and Jiva from the first two words, and arriving at the identity of both in Brahman which is their substratum.]

यदि कुर्यात्प्रमादेन योगी कर्म विगर्हितम् ॥

योगेनैव दहेदंहो नान्यत्तत्र कदाचन ॥ २५ ॥

25. If through inadvertence the Yogi does some culpable deed, he should burn the sin thereof through Yoga<sup>1</sup> alone. There is no other<sup>2</sup> way.

[<sup>1</sup> *Yoga*—the practice of Jnanam. This implies also the taking of the Lord's name and such other means in the case of the Bhakti-Yogin.

<sup>2</sup> *No other way*—such as expiation.]

स्वे स्वेऽधिकारे या निष्ठा स गुणः परिकीर्तितः ॥

कर्मणां जात्यशुद्धानामनेन नियमः कृतः ॥

गुणदोषविधानेन सङ्गानां त्याजनेच्छया ॥ २६ ॥

26. The steadfastness<sup>1</sup> to the duties of one's own sphere is considered as merit. By the declaration<sup>2</sup> of their merits and defects, a restriction<sup>3</sup> is made with regard to actions, which are impure in their very nature, in order to remove people's attachment to them.

[<sup>1</sup> *Steadfastness &c.*—This explains why his sins would be burnt without the help of expiation, which is meant for those who work for selfish ends.

<sup>2</sup> *Declaration &c.*—enjoining some and prohibiting others.  
See Verse 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Restriction &c.*—so that man's natural tendency for work—which is the root of all mischief—may be gradually controlled and finally overcome.]

जातश्रद्धो मत्कथासु निर्विण्णः सर्वकर्मसु ॥

वेद दुःखात्मकान्कामान्परित्यागेऽप्यनीश्वरः ॥ २७ ॥

ततो भजेत मां प्रीतः श्रद्धालुर्हृदनिश्चयः ॥

जुषमाणश्च तान्कामान्दुःखोदकांश्च गर्हयन् ॥ २८ ॥

27—28. Should a man who has got faith in tales about Me and is disgusted with all kinds of work,<sup>1</sup> know desires to be full of misery and yet fail to give them up, then this man of faith, with firm conviction,<sup>2</sup> should cheerfully worship Me, as he goes on satisfying those desires fraught with painful consequences,—condemning<sup>3</sup> them all the while.

[Bhakti-Yoga is described in verses 27—35.

<sup>1</sup> *Work*—but not with their fruits.

<sup>2</sup> *Conviction*—that devotion alone will achieve everything.

<sup>3</sup> *Condemning &c.*—This discrimination gradually weans the mind from such desires, when devotion does its full work.]

प्रोक्तेन भक्तियोगेन भजतो माऽसकृन्मुनेः ॥

कामा हृदया नश्यन्ति सर्वे मयि हृदि स्थिते ॥ २९ ॥

29. If a meditative man constantly worships Me through the path of devotion mentioned above,<sup>1</sup> all the desires of his heart are destroyed, for I<sup>2</sup> reside in his heart.

[The method of worship and its effect are set forth in this and the next verse.

<sup>1</sup> *Above*—e.g. in verses 20—23 of the preceding chapter.

<sup>2</sup> *For I &c.*—and the two cannot live together, like light and darkness.]

मिथ्यते हृदयग्रन्थिशिछ्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ॥

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि मयि दृष्टेऽखिलात्मनि ॥ ३० ॥

30 When he sees Me, the Self of all, the knot<sup>1</sup> of

his heart breaks to pieces, all his doubts are dispelled, and his Karma<sup>2</sup> is destroyed.

[A close reproduction of Mundaka II, ii. 8.

<sup>1</sup> *Knot &c.*—i.e. egoism.

<sup>2</sup> *Karma*—The resultant of past works stored as tendencies in the mind. Of these tendencies some are very strong and work themselves out in this birth. They are called *prârabdha* (the commenced). Others, forming by far the greater portion, are comparatively feeble in strength. These are destroyed on the dawning of realisation. But not the former, which persist till the fall of the body. A special name, viz. *âgâmi* or the forthcoming, is given to those works which a man does after the attainment of realisation. But these cannot bind him any more. For a discussion on the subject vide the *Brahma Sutras* IV. i. 13—15.]

तस्मान्मद्भक्तियुक्तस्य योगिनो वै मदात्मनः ॥

न ज्ञानं न च वैराग्यं प्रायः श्रेयो भवेदिह ॥ ३१ ॥

31. Hence the practice of knowledge or dispassion is scarcely of any use to the Yogi who is devoted to Me and has his mind centred in Me.

[Devotion is exalted in verses 31—33.]

यत्कर्मभिर्यत्तपसा ज्ञानवैराग्यतश्च यत् ॥

योगेन दानधर्मेण श्रेयोभित्तिरैरपि ॥ ३२ ॥

सर्वं मद्भक्तियोगेन भद्रं लभतेऽज्ञसा ॥

स्वर्गापवर्गं मद्भाम कथंचिद्यदि वाञ्छति ॥ ३३ ॥

32—33. Whatever is acquired through works, austerities, knowledge, dispassion, Yoga, or charity, or through any other means of well-being, My devotee easily attains to it all through devotion to Me,—aye, even heaven, or liberation, or My abode, should he care to have it.

न किञ्चित्साधवो धीरा भक्ता ह्येकान्तिनो मम ॥

वाञ्छन्त्यपि मया दत्तं कैवल्यमपुनर्भवम् ॥ ३४ ॥

34. Those saintly persons who are of a steady mind and are devoted exclusively to Me, never desire absolute<sup>1</sup> independence, even if I offer it to them.

[<sup>1</sup> *Absolute*—literally, free from birth.]

नैरपेक्ष्यं परं प्राहुर्निःश्रेयसमनल्पकम् ॥

तस्मान्निराशिषो भक्तिर्निरपेक्षस्य मे भवेत् ॥ ३५ ॥

35. Caring for nothing has been called the highest and the fullest well-being. Therefore the man who has no desires and cares for naught attains to devotion to Me.

न मय्येकान्तभक्तानां गुणदोषोद्भवा गुणाः ॥

साधूनां समचित्तानां बुद्धेः परमुपेयुषाम् ॥ ३६ ॥

36. Merits<sup>1</sup> and defects arising from the performance of acts enjoined and prohibited, do not affect those saints who are exclusively devoted to Me, who are of an even mind, and who have realised the Being<sup>2</sup> who is beyond the intellect.

[<sup>1</sup> *Merits* &c. For the idea compare Ta'ttiriya Upa. II. ix. 1 and Brihadaranyaka Upa. IV. iv. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Being* &c. viz. the Paramatman.]

एवमेतन्मयादिष्टाननुतिष्ठन्ति मे पथः ॥

क्षेमं विन्दन्ति मत्स्थानं यद्ब्रह्म परमं विदुः ॥ ३७ ॥

37. Those who thus practise these means<sup>1</sup> to My attainment, which I have just taught, attain to My abode, which is all bliss, and also realise the Supreme Brahman.

[<sup>1</sup> *Means* &c. viz. the three Yogas.]

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## NEWS AND NOTES.

### THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SHIELD.

Notwithstanding all the glitter which strikes one from a merely superficial view, modern civilisation is not all gold. This is the burden of the message of many modern writers. Till very recently, the majority of people all over the world unquestioningly accepted the progress of science, revolutions in trade, commerce and industry, phenomenal increase in the facilities for travel and communications, annihilation of distance and barriers of all kinds, cheapness of money, accumulations of wealth and power, ever increasing wants and sources of enjoyments, the race for world markets and world domination, and the conquest of land, sea and air, as if all these were absolutely good.

The naive faith and the self-complacent mood of the past generation has given place to one of doubt and searching of heart. In the April number of the *Current Thought* (we are happy to find that it not only contains many instructive and useful articles but also shows steady progress in its printing, get up etc.), Mr. K. S. Ramaswamy Shastri shows that 'the New Trinity of Modernity, Urbanisation and Speed has not been found to be a true Godhead.' It is pointed out that Mammon has replaced God, that village life, with its health, longevity, peace, love and joy, has given place to town life, with its high pressure, nerve ruination and inner bankruptcy. Every one is familiar with the numerous blessings of the progress of science in recent times but few are alive to the havoc done to art, ethics, philosophy and religion by the growing complexities of modern life. It is obvious how industrial progress leads to commercial rivalries and wars among the various nations. The writer truly observes—"The arts and crafts movement, the movement towards cottage industries, and the new battle-cry of 'back to

the land' are signs of a new feeling of revolt against such industrial megalomania. \* \* \* Modernity and speed have not only ruined communities and countries, but they have as effectually ruined homes and hearts as well. The hotel and the factory have, between their double broadsides, battered down the home. The nomads of civilisation are wandering all over the world."

We believe with the writer that the West is surfeited with business and progress, and stands in urgent need of missionaries from the East to preach plain living and high thinking, to combine culture with leisure, joy and peace with knowledge and power, and in a word, to teach the art of life, so that it may ultimately lead to the peace that passeth all understanding.

#### THE BOY SCOUT MOVEMENT.

A great bane of the life of our young men is that very few of them have got any healthy hobby to forget themselves at times. A good many of them have usually to carry the double burden of passing examinations and maintaining big families, and they bear that without a smile or anything to cheer them. The dread of examination, which they think is the only and sure passport to prosperity in life, hangs constantly like Damocles' sword upon their head, while the growing poverty of their family eats into their vitality and robs them of all the joys of their life. So by the time they come out of the University they are no better than physical wrecks.

One of the reasons, why our educated community are quite at a loss to face the struggle for existence is that they are enfeebled in body and mind, due to the bad training they receive in their younger days. Not that they lack intelligence or ideas, but they have not the power of initiative or resourcefulness to apply them in life. They have not the vitality to run the risk of entering into any new field of activity, and in consequence, they are always on the look out to find out some beaten track that will involve less difficulty and a sure pittance.

Of course, there are some who, having an idealistic temperament, are ready to sacrifice their personal comforts and devote their life to any altruistic work. But because they have no systematic training and experience of such things, they sometimes dare not enter the field and, if they enter it at all, cannot show good results. We find nowadays plenty of associations started for giving temporary relief in times of flood, famine or such other occasional catastrophes, the only work in which the country has been trained to some extent. But the number of organisations for permanent works is limited.

The above defects may be remedied, if our boys are given a systematic training in social service, and other works of public welfare from their very childhood. In the West the Boy Scout Movement that gives a regular training in these lines has been a phenomenal success and acquired even international reputation. But in India it has not as yet met with the sympathy it deserves. The reasons for this, as enumerated by Mr. C. Subba Rau, a scout commissioner, in an article written in the 'Volunteer' are these: (1) The Scout Movement has got a foreign appearance; (2) it looks un-national because of the uniform; (3) it has got the suspicion of being an official movement.

But none of these reasons seem to be strong enough to stand in the way of our taking it, if thereby a great public good can be done. Given sufficient encouragement, it is sure to give a tone to the health of our young people, to inspire them with a spirit of national and social service—a work to which many of them may stick even in their after-life. And, above all, the practical training that they will thus receive will be a good supplement to their academic education.

Fortunately, however, we hear of a good record of work done by the Movement in some places. At Shanti Niketan of Bolpur, for instance, we learn that under the auspices of the Scout Movement many works of social service have been undertaken and met with a great success. The more such movements spread, the better for our country.

THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA,  
BOMBAY.

About two years ago the Western India Vivekananda Society invited Swami Sharvananda, President of the Madras Branch of the R. K. Mission, to inaugurate a centre in Bombay. The Swami by his lectures on the Vedanta philosophy and religion in English and Hindi aroused considerable interest in the movement with the result that an Ashrama was started at Santa Cruz. The Ashrama has since been spreading its good influence throughout the city by holding classes and organising lectures on religious and philosophical subjects. A free dispensary had been attached to the Ashrama doing good work, but it had to be closed for want of funds. The Swamis there are trying to revive it.

The Ashrama is at present located in a rented building at Khar Road, which, it is needless to say, is quite unsuitable for many reasons. The need is increasingly being felt for a permanent place where the Swamis who conduct the Ashrama may live. It is proposed to start a fund for the purpose of acquiring a plot of land at Khar Road which has already been selected and of constructing a building with a common hall for holding classes, a library room, a shrine room and two or three living rooms. The cost is estimated at Rs. 25,000 which it would not be difficult for a rich city like Bombay to subscribe. All sympathisers of the movement and charitably disposed persons are earnestly requested to contribute their mite and help to carry out this noble project.

THE SOUTH INDIA FLOOD RELIEF.

The Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, place before the public their report of the relief work done by them during the floods in South India, in 1924. It is a record of brilliant service done to suffering humanity without any distinction of caste or creed.

Altogether 24 centres were started and worked by the Mission with 32 workers reaching as many as 200



villages in the various affected areas. The kinds of work done were as follows: (1) Free distribution of rice and other food grains to the starving people, and the selling of rice at reduced rates; (2) distribution of cloth to the distressed; (3) distribution of hut-building materials and helping to erect new huts on suitable sites.

The number of persons given relief through free distribution of food grains was 17,200. The number of cloths distributed was 4,532 and of huts built 7,036. The total amount of subscriptions and donations received from the public was Rs. 66,439-5-2, and the expenditure was Rs. 53,106-2-0, the balance being deposited at the Central Urban Bank, Madras. It is proposed to open a Provident Relief Fund with this amount as a nucleus, so as to give a ready start and organise famine and flood relief works in case of emergency.

#### MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY.

The President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, has the pleasure to acknowledge with hearty thanks the following further contributions to the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary fund from August to December, 1924:—

*Collected through Swami Nikhilananda:* Sri Bhavani Singhji, Chota Udaipur, Rs. 101; Kumar Shri Pratap Singhji, Limbdi, Rs. 350; His Highness the Thakore Saheb of Morvi, for the year 1924, Rs. 350; Jumakhram Khemchand Esq., Rs. 10. TOTAL Rs. 811.

*Received at Mayavati:* A. R. Kumaraguru Esq., Bangalore, Rs. 3; H. Herold Esq., St. Louis, Rs. 16; D. K. Natu Esq., Surat, Rs. 10; Ram Prasad Esq., Kareli, Re. 1; Seth Sankalchand, Ahmedabad, Rs. 10; Vedanta Society Class, Sumner, N. Z. through Miss B. E. Baughan, Rs. 14-4; J. H. Bharucha Esq., Poona, Rs. 3; His Highness the Thakore Saheb of Limbdi, for the year 1924, Rs. 350. TOTAL Rs. 407-4 as.

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# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्नबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

*23rd December, 1920.*

A small audience, consisting mostly of the Sadhus of the Order, gathered before the Swami, and he was talking freely with them.

"Can you tell me how to cure a disease of the mind?" said he. There was silence amongst the assembled people, and he continued—"I myself know it and can instruct others also how to do it. But the rub is that I myself am the victim of the disease now. I will just tell you a story.

"There was a man who could make a whole assembly of people split their sides with laughter. He was so full of wit and humour. But it so happened that the man himself came to have melancholia. He was robbed of all his fun and joy. To get rid of the malady he consulted a physician and tried various remedies. But all were to no purpose. At last the doctor not knowing who

he was advised him to see the noted funny man, meaning the latter. 'Can you see that gentleman? You will be all right if you do,' said the doctor. He replied—'Yes, I can do that. But unfortunately I am the very person you refer to!' The doctor was abashed. Of course, the remedy suggested by him failed. My condition also is somewhat like that of the funny man."

*25th December.*

The talk this day was about retirement. It had been introduced as a spiritual discipline by the Swami at the Shanti Ashrama, California, U. S. A., when he had been there. He said—"The American devotees coming up and living there used to call it "talking with the Self.' It helped them much spiritually, and they used to acknowledge it." Those who were sitting before the Swami and listening to him were much interested in the talk.

He continued—"But it was a rule that none was to remain with himself for more than three days. Once a lady, Miss B——, retired without my knowledge. I myself was then living like that, occupying an outhouse of the Ashrama at a distance. G—— was the only other male inmate at that time, and he used to bring me a cup of tea, a little toast etc. for my food. Of course, I made an exception in my case and was to be in retirement for a week."

He then described how that lady had made up her mind to be in seclusion for a week and observe the vow of silence and constant meditation with scanty food like himself. He said—"The seclusion soon became too much for her, and she was about to be out of her mind. I was then observing the vow of silence in my solitary cell. But something like a premonition told me that an untoward event was going to happen. I felt uneasy and had to come out on the fifth day of my retirement. Miss B—— was being served by a young woman. Her condition was really serious. I sent for her, and when she came I gave her a good scolding. She admitted her mistake and begged to be pardoned. I was thinking of asking her to

go away. But afterwards finding that she was repentant I let her remain."

The Swami went on—"She herself said soon after, 'I was about to die. Had I not been made to come out I would have actually died.' The lady was a woman of exceptional parts. For fourteen years she had been a platform speaker, addressing various audiences. At the age of sixty-two she founded an institution called 'The Home of Truth' and conducted it for some years. But she was very conceited."

The Swami said that at the Shanti Ashrama there were many like her, distinguished, but opinionative. Of course, they were all sincere. It was the Swami Vivekananda who had entrusted the Swami with the work of training these strong personalities, and he had done his work as best as he could. He admitted that they would wonder and say—"Swami! How can you manage to keep so many conflicting temperaments together and train them? We watch carefully every movement of yours, but find nothing defective in your conduct. It is as it should be." He then explained the secret of his training and added—"To manage an organisation well, one must behave like a mother, full of love and consideration."

He referred to the case of K—— who had joined the Order in India, but afterwards, failing to pull on with the inmates of the Ashrama where he had been placed, left it. The Swami remarked—"I was so sorry to hear that K—— had left. At the Shanti Ashrama I had similar experiences. Many times I had to scold the inmates. But as they were sincere, they obeyed me and stuck on."

"K—— was ill on the eve of his departure. He pined for his home and wanted that he should be served as tenderly as by the home people. Of course, he did not get that treatment and went away. It is not unnatural that a novice should think like that when he falls ill. But as he grows old in wisdom and experience, he learns to adapt himself to his environment and to the rigid life of a Sadhu."

The conversation went on. The Swami emphasised

love as the greatest binding force to hold the units of an organisation, saying—"What is needed is love. Even beasts appreciate it. It cannot be that a sensible being like man will not understand it. 'Why does the lamb love Mary? Because Mary loves the lamb.' " The party departed enthused and inspired by the stirring words of the Swami.

### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

This is essentially an age of materialism. Naturally enough, religion is at a great discount. Persons are not wanting who pride themselves and glory in flouting religion. Even the vast majority of those who outwardly conform to the rites and forms of the particular religion in which they are born, do so more from habit and in deference to convention than from faith and inner conviction. In all ages, of course, there have been a few earnest and sincerely religious people. The conduct of these, of necessity, differs and even conflicts with that of their fellows. As might naturally be expected, these are a puzzle to the worldly-minded. Some of the latter, who boast of their knowledge and advancement, do not hesitate to rank the former among lunatics, neurotics, degenerates etc. To this method of explaining away the strange behaviour of God-intoxicated men, and the peculiar symptoms such as visions and trances which they have when the religious mood is on them, Prof. James gives the name of 'medical materialism'.

It is unnecessary to examine in detail all the implications of this theory. The main point which the advocates of this theory lay stress upon is that there are material and organic causes for religious phenomena, as there are for physical. "Vice and virtue are products like vitriol and sugar." This theory "finishes up St. Paul by calling his vision on the road to Damascus a discharging lesion

of the occipital cortex, he being an epileptic. It snuffs out St. Teresa as an hysteric, St. Francis of Assisi as an hereditary degenerate, and so on." This much can readily be admitted that in the lives of all those persons to whom religion is no mere dogma to be believed in or formal ceremonials to be gone through, but an intensely real and living affair engrossing their whole soul, there have been symptoms of nervous instability and abnormal psychical and emotional sensibility. They are also said to have fallen into trances, seen visions, heard voices and had such other strange experiences which the material scientists would describe as pathological. One writer goes so far as to say that "whenever a man's life is at once sufficiently illustrious and recorded with sufficient fulness to be a subject of profitable study, he inevitably falls into the morbid category. And it is worthy of remark that, as a rule, the greater the genius, the greater the unsoundness."

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The last statement is of too sweeping a nature to be of any practical value. To be strictly logical, it should take all productions of geniuses at a great discount as proceeding from a pathological source. But usually, in science, in arts and in industries, no one ever seriously tries to judge their merit by the standard of the constitutional peculiarities of their respective originators, but by the crucial test of experiments and actual results. Prof. James argues that these same tests should be applied in the case of religious phenomena as well, and in his happy phraseology puts it thus—"By their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots." A pragmatist and empiricist as he is, he would accept their usefulness and validity on their immediate luminousness, in short, philosophical reasonableness and moral helpfulness.

The Hindu philosophers would, no doubt, accept that in all cases of genuine religious exaltation this luminous-

ness, reasonableness and helpfulness are bound to be there. But they do not stop with these somewhat inferential tests simply. They point out that religion is realisation, being and becoming, and that all progress lies along the path of renunciation and universal love. The ultimate goal of all religions, according to them, is to help man to realise that Divinity which is his essential nature. Even though the aim is the same, the methods adopted may differ with different individuals and temperaments. That there should be or could be one universal form of religion with invariable rules of worship and uniform standards of conduct is, in their opinion, not only a vain dream but would be a calamity, if it could ever be realised. They have always recognised the supreme need for providing absolute freedom to individuals to attain to their highest ideals, and that however different and apparently conflicting the various forms might appear, there should be both universal toleration and mutual respect. The peculiar word which they use for these different methods is Yoga i.e. 'union', for they help man to be united with the Ultimate Reality. So we have four chief methods of union viz. (1) Karma Yoga—the realisation of man's Divinity through duty and unselfish works, (2) Bhakti Yoga—the realisation by means of devotion to and love of a Personal God, (3) Jñâna Yoga—the realisation through discrimination and right knowledge, and (4) Râja Yoga—the realisation through control and purification of the mind.

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For obvious reasons, it is impossible to say that any one of these Yogas is easier than the others or *vice versa*. Different individuals would find different methods most easy and best suited to them. Nevertheless, if it is remembered that the essence of any form of religious life is renunciation, the contrast in this respect of Bhakti Yoga with Jñâna Yoga becomes clear enough. The path of the Jñâna Yogin is to grow in the realisation that the entire material world with its multitudinous manifestations is an illusion. He has also to get himself firmly established in

the rational conviction that he is the Pure Soul and, as such, has neither lot nor part in the play of nature. In other words, he has to renounce most sternly every feeling, impulse and urge of nature. On the other hand, those who take to the Bhakti Mârga have not to commit any sort of violence to their natural tendencies. This, of course, is not to be identified with the blind indulgence of the natural man. The essence of his Sadhana is to give a new bent to all his natural emotions, and to substitute a progressively higher object of satisfaction. For instance, the love of sense-objects makes way for intellectual and other finer enjoyments. Lastly, these again are abandoned in favour of the bliss resulting from the contemplation and love of God. In this love of God, again, there are various stages, beginning with images, forms, rituals, temples, and other such numerous limitations, and culminating in that supreme devotion where all distinctions fall off. The devotee is now not conscious of any struggle with his rebellious emotions. Every one of his feelings is present there in a more vivid and intense form, but with this great difference that they all now flow towards God, the Ocean of Immortal Bliss.



Until the devotee's mind has attained to such a state of purity and love, where all thoughts of sense-enjoyments and other low pleasures are impossible, he has not attained his goal, *viz.* supreme devotion to the Lord. Sri Krishna in the Gita declares—"Those who, having offered up all their work unto Me, with entire reliance on Me, meditate on Me, and worship Me without any attachment to anything else, are soon lifted up from the ocean of death and ever-recurring birth, as their mind is wholly attached to Me." This is the explanation of the phenomenon of the blessed Gopis attaining to Absolute Freedom. According to the Vishnu Purana, the intense misery of soul in not attaining unto God washed off all the sinful propensities, and the intense pleasure in meditating on Him took away the binding effect of all good deeds, and so made



them free. One consequence of this blissful state is that the devotee comes to love all beings, and all things become sacred to him. To him all are God's children and everything is God's manifestation. Such a kind of intense all-absorbing love produces in the devotee absolute calmness and perfect self-surrender. In this state, everything, be it pleasure or pain, is welcome, proceeding as it does from the Lord who is all Love. No sacrifice, including that of his own life, is deemed too much. The goal of perfect Bhakti is that highest point where all sense of self is completely destroyed and the whole life of the devotee becomes a continuous stream of ever-ready and ever-willing self-sacrifice.



But, say the critics, the ideal is true, noble and grand, no doubt. In practice, however, the introduction of the element of music, dance, eroticism and similar emotional colourings, which almost all schools of Bhakti adopt, has sown the seeds of demoralisation, and, in the long run, led to unethetical tendencies. Recently, we have come across a book\* dealing with one of the most notable movements of the Bhakti cult, viz. the Chaitanya Movement of Bengal. Before we proceed to a critical examination of the charges levelled against the Bhakti schools in general, a few words about the book may not be out of place. To the delicate and difficult task of description and critical estimate of personalities, customs, ideas and modes of life, which are alien to the author's religious outlooks, the writer has brought into play sympathy and imagination, and his performance is, on the whole, characterised by sincerity and fairness. Here and there, however, the author's Christian prepossessions have betrayed him into erroneous views and judgment, perhaps unconsciously. In spite of these few defects, the book

\* 'The Chaitanya Movement, a study of the Vaishnavism of Bengal.'—By Melville T. Kennedy, M.A. Published by the Association Press (Y. M. C. A.), 5, Russell St., Calcutta.

gives a very good and full account of the various aspects of the Chaitanya Movement.



Such experiences as weeping, perspiring, the flowing of tears, hair standing on end, visions, trances etc., are all associated with many Bhakti schools, and to most Westerners, and to a certain section of Indian critics as well, these things appear as a 'wild orgy,' or at best as signs of a neuro-pathological condition. Regarding this latter view of the matter, enough has already been said in our criticism of the views of 'medical materialism.' In the Madhura Bhava, in which the Lord is worshipped as the Beloved, the divine lovers, no doubt, express their ecstatic union in the language of human love. Sometimes, this love is even compared with illegitimate love for the reason that that alone can, in a way, convey the intensity and passion of the divine love. Only those who are perfectly pure in mind can get a glimpse of this unique conception. But to all those who look upon it with a carnal eye, Saint Tulsidas gives an effective reply thus—"Where Rama is, there is no room for Kama (desire), and vice versa. Like light and darkness they can never be together."



Still some critics argue that few gifted persons succeed in reaching the pinnacle of devotion, *viz.* the Parâ Bhakti. In the large majority of cases, the erotic symbolism only affords a convenient cloak for disguising the sensual propensities. It must be admitted that in some of the Vaishnavite sects such a regular use is made of the purest and most sublime conception of the Madhura Bhava. But when one considers the matter in a dispassionate spirit, it is obvious that it is not the fault of the path of devotion or its numerous branches, if certain abuses have crept in, in the course of time. Nor is it in the Bhakti schools of Hinduism alone that the highest spiritual ideas are brought down to the low level of carnality. It is need-

less to hunt out parallels in other faiths and religions. The history of the world abounds in instances where the true spirit of the lives and messages of the great teachers, in course of time, has been lost sight of and even degraded and put to other uses which would have simply shocked the founders. The idea of self-surrender, which all the Bhakti cults emphasise, deserves to be brought into prominence especially at the present day, as the world is converted into a veritable hell by the demon of the worship of the body and of the things of the body, producing horrible selfishness, fierce competition, merciless exploitation of the weak, and a fiendish hatred of one another. If all this tremendous fight in life is understood to be but a blind struggle for that Eternal Bliss which is the Lord Himself—this is what the Bhakti Yoga teaches us,—then would peace, harmony and goodwill reign among mankind.

## THE PREDESTINED FORCES OF THE FUTURE.

BY SWAMI ADWAIHANANDA.

The great war has come and gone, leaving in front of us the face of an ambiguous future. The ideals which were so loud of mouth during the conflict, are now completely discredited. Humanity has the figure of a derelict vessel with a broken mast and rudder drifting on a stormy sea. Nowhere amongst the statesmen of the day do we find a just idea which would pacify the world. A great intellectual and moral bankruptcy has succeeded the delirium of massacre. The principle of self-determination so loudly proclaimed is now openly denied and summarily rejected by the victorious empires. The spectacle of subject peoples and protected nations demanding freedom and held down by military force continues to be the main feature of the day. The promised termination of militarism is as far off as ever. All these things were clearly foreseen by a few profound

thinkers who, while acknowledging the force and the value of idealism, had the clarity of vision to see into the future with a searching gaze.

This is, however, only one phase of the situation. It is the most obvious but not, therefore, the most important. The expectation of an immediate transformation of human nature was the outcome of a superficial observation. The task to be accomplished is too great to be so easy. One solitary experience, however painful and terrible, cannot renovate and purify the mind of humanity. It has a salutary effect. It has indelibly impressed upon the mind some wholesome lessons. Moreover, it was a colossal error to imagine that mere change of political machinery can ever be the sufficient panacea for the defects of civilisation. It is a change of spirit and therefore a spiritual transformation that can alone form the basis of a greater and better social existence. But it must be admitted that however great their outward appearance, the old principles show signs of weakness and have forfeited the promise of the future.

During the progress of the war, it was quite evident that the growing estrangement between capital and labour and the Asiatic question were the two great problems of the future. The war itself was a contest between the German idea and the middle-class liberation of the peoples of France, England and America, and during the settlement of that issue other questions were temporarily kept back. There was a truce between capital and labour which was brought about by false promises of reconciliation. The Asiatic question also was held in abeyance as enticing prospects of self-determination and independence were held out before their bewildered gaze. All this is now of the past. The natural and inevitable relations have reasserted themselves, and great questions are now coming to a head.

The two incurably antagonistic forces of socialism and capitalism are now confronting each other all over Europe, and we find their echo even in Asiatic countries. The old middle-class regime still holds the material power

because of mens' habit of preferring present ills to new adventures. But it has to face a very strong and powerful actuality in the form of a successful and revolutionary regime in Russia. In other countries the current of revolution is only checked for the time being, because the accumulation of forces and ideas that make for a revolution in our day is immeasurably greater. The materials of an immense political, social and economic upheaval or perhaps of a series of formidable explosions everywhere consolidate their position and their fighting strength.

The continued existence and unbroken success of the Russian revolution, in spite of the adoption of all measures, fair or foul, by other interested powers to limit its duration, promises to be a very significant event in human history. This is quite independent of the merits or demerits or the chances of survival of the present Bolshevik regime. The present dictatorship is admittedly an instrument of transition. It is a momentary concentration of revolutionary force. More important is the power of the idea that is behind these successes and has made them possible. A great nation has abolished its past foundations, cut itself off from its traditional moorings, replaced middle-class parliamentarism by a new form of government and used its potential energy to initiate a new experiment in the science of social construction. Acts of faith and audacities of this kind change or accelerate the pace of human progress. It does not necessarily follow that the form of social organisation adopted is desirable, but it is a certain sign that a phase of civilisation is beginning to pass, and a novel social order is in the course of preparation. The direction of the current is already clear. The present system of capitalistic industrialism has reached its limits and is condemned to perish. The issue of the future lies between a labour industrialism different only in organisation from its predecessor, some greater spirit or form of communistic society such as is being attempted in Russia, or else the emergence of a new and as yet unforeseen principle.

The second upcoming force that is full of great potentialities is the resurgence of Asia. The temperament of Asiatic peoples is radically different. The build and movement of their minds is of another character. At present the movement of revival in Asia is finding a predominant expression in attempts to throw off the foreign political and economic subjection. It is manifest in a variety of forms from Egypt to China. The Moslem States reject the theories of protectorates and mandates and claim absolute independence. In India there is a wide-spread and ever-growing dissatisfaction with half methods, and there is a persistent cry for 'Home-rule,' within the Empire. There is also a growing party which believes in the potency of idealism and therefore demands that absolute freedom should be placed before the people as a national objective. In the Far East obscure movements are in the process of formation. We also see the dawn of the idea that Asiatic federation is a *sine qua non*, if the political and economic exploitation of Asiatic peoples by the Western nations is to be put a stop to.

At the same time, there is involved, subconsciously as yet in the masses but already assuming a definite form in the minds of the cultured few, an ideal of spiritual and cultural independence and the defence against the European invasion of the subtle principle of Asiatic culture. This cultural onslaught is more degrading and detrimental to the interests of Asiatic nations. Thinkers of Asia have now begun to realise this fact, and the demand that is everywhere prevalent in Asia for a double, an inner and outer resistance, is an outcome of this conviction.

These two forces which, it is quite clear, will lead the future, for the moment, tend to form a moral alliance. The labour and socialistic parties in the politically dominant nations strongly condemn the aggressive policies of their governments and extend their support to the claims of dependent peoples. Bolshevik Russia has tremendous influence in the States of Central Asia and lends moral support to all countries striving for political freedom. This tendency may be short-lived. The forces in

action are invariably opportunist and avail themselves for the time being of help from any quarter. Such mechanical alliances are fragile and ephemeral. But this much is clear that the present scheme of things is opposed to the spirit of the times and is menaced by the growth of two formidable world-forces.

The evolution of a socialistic society and the resurgence of Asia are sure to introduce radical changes, but it is doubtful whether they will realise the highest human aspirations. Socialism will surely conduce to a more equitable distribution of wealth, will give sufficient leisure to all for intellectual and cultural pursuits, but it will be merely a mechanical change. The resurgence of Asia, also, if it merely means a shifting of the balance of international forces, will not be a substantial move forward. Of course, an international equality is much better than the present order of domination and exploitation, but it is merely a framework. The underlying spirit also must undergo a complete transformation, because that alone can be the decisive factor. Nothing can be real in life that is not made real in the spirit. The idea and the sentiment are not enough. They undergo constant fluctuations and are combated by deep-seated nature and instincts. There must be an immense spiritual advance, if freedom, equality and unity are to be made the internal and external possession of all. Only a spiritual change can bring this about, and the intellect of Europe laboured by Hellenism is beginning to see the necessity of a spiritual change. A mere rational formula still holds the sway, but a movement in the direction of the spirit has already begun in Europe.

Asia in the past made no great endeavour for social progress. Her main occupation was the discovery of a spiritual and inner freedom and not an external perfection. Outwardly, she tried for a secure social framework and a fixed economic system. The result was a sharp discrepancy between her inner and outward life. In India this attitude of mind found expression in the seclusion of the best who lived in the spirit. But the

commingling of the two great streams of thought, Eastern and Western, has forced Asia to face the life-problem with a broader vision. She is at liberty to imitate the Occidental experiment or to reject entirely all the achievements of the West and rest satisfied with her glorious but insufficient past. But in that case her resurgence will in no way benefit either herself or humanity in general. Looking to the nature of the forces working in Asia, however, we find that the probability is that the contact of these two halves of the mind of humanity will get up a more powerful connection between the two poles of our being and result in a full synthesis of the highest ideals of each, subjective and objective freedom and equality.

## THE REVIVAL OF HINDUISM AND SWAMI DAYANANDA.

*(Continued from p. 261.)*

Regarding the caste system, Dayananda's teaching is that the caste of a person should be determined by his or her character, education and habits of life, that it should be settled after the completion of education *i.e.*, at the age of twenty-five in the case of boys and sixteen in the case of girls, that the State should provide persons with suitable children whenever their own children have been placed in other castes in accordance with the above method, and that the State and other responsible persons should see that all the castes discharge their duties faithfully. About these strange notions it is enough to say that no Arya Samajist has, as yet, been found to observe these rules. The impracticability and absurdity of any such arrangement must be patent to everybody.

Many Arya Samajists are, however, found in practice to be eager to get themselves included among the higher castes without any of the prescribed qualifications. Not unoften do we find their preachers proclaiming that caste should be determined by Guna and Karma (quality and action), but how and who is to determine these is con-



veniently ignored. Nor is it at all possible to devise any meter or gauge to indicate impartially and accurately the varying shades and fluctuations of Guna and Karma. Neither is the problem solved by declaring, as do some reformers, that caste is doomed and it should be abolished. We are, as blind admirers of any institution, regardless of its merits or utility. The caste system has become much disorganised and petrified, and the present day conditions do require many thorough-going alterations in that institution. No one can prescribe any cut and dried plan but must be guided by the time-spirit and experience. Our own idea is that the determination of caste according to Guna and Karma could be made only in matters spiritual, while birth alone must continue to be the guiding principle in such matters as inheritance, marriage etc. In the eyes of law, so far as all political, civic and public affairs are concerned, questions of religion and caste should not come in either to confer privileges or to impose disabilities. Some such arrangement seems to be the most satisfactory way out of the tangle of the caste system as it exists to-day.

There are a few other matters such as the Shrâddha ceremony performed by the orthodox Hindus to which the Arya Samajists take exception. We do not consider it necessary to enter into the details of this question. The propagation of the Vedic religion (which to the Arya Samajist means following the 'Dayananda Smriti' or 'Satyârtha Prakâsh'), and the Shuddhi or the conversion into Hinduism are the main functions of the preachers, who are generally paid and whose duty is to preach and to officiate at the ceremonials. It is claimed that many superstitious beliefs of the people and much of the darkness of the ages have been cleared up through their agency. We have no desire to dispute this claim. Nevertheless, we have grave doubts whether in moral and spiritual matters any permanent and lasting results can be achieved by the preachings of men who rarely possess any extraordinary spirituality or for the matter of that even secular knowledge, whose domain and extent have be-

come so vast to-day and are rapidly widening with the march of time. The work of the Christian missions, aided with all the resources of wealth, power and organisation, even after a thousand years of activity, has not been able either to banish the superstitions or to dispel the darkness of the human race. If any real service is rendered to humanity, it is through the teachings of great spiritual giants and pure and holy men, whose lives have been an embodiment of unselfish love and service.

Then, as regards conversions, we believe it is more a matter of the change of heart and spirit than a change in one's name, creed, church, or dogma. It is a familiar fact that when persons whose capacity to understand any religion has not been developed to any appreciable extent, are converted, the change is effected through other than religious motives, and consequently they become no better, except that they add to the numerical strength of the community in question.

We shall now turn to a consideration of the personality of Swami Dayananda, and his contribution to the age in which he lived. We have nothing but respectful regard and veneration for his personality. It is a fact of no mean consideration that quite an appreciable number of persons who came in personal contact with him have felt themselves blessed, have been saved from falling into the abyss of atheism and materialism, and have felt the call to dedicate their lives to the cause of their country and fellow-men. Even at the present day, his name is a force capable of rousing thousands of people from their slumber to rally round his banner, and his words bring solace and peace in their lives. We bow to his vast learning and erudition, his patriotism, his boldness and fearlessness, his sincerity and honesty of purpose, his steadfast devotion to truth, his love of humanity and in particular of the oppressed and down-trodden people, his hatred of shams and falsehood wherever found, his strict Brahmacharya and rigorous life of renunciation and above all his manly independence and contempt for wealth and power. Yet all these do not blind us to the fact that some of his

theories and conclusions and methods of work are not only not convincing but also seem to us to be opposed to reason. Regarding the Vedas, Dayananda holds that they are books revealed by God, and he quotes with approval from Shatapatha Brahmana—"In the beginning, God revealed the Rik, Jajur, Sama and Atharva to Agni, Vayu, Aditya and Angira respectively." To the question 'Is there any necessity for a supernatural revelation and cannot the human mind acquire knowledge by itself?'—Dayananda replies that there are no such initial inherent powers or possibilities in man. His argument is that both the savages and men of civilised communities need to be instructed before they become educated. "The first inspiration must therefore come from God at the very beginning of creation." Before we proceed to a consideration of these views, we may refer to another peculiarity of Dayananda, *viz.* his method of interpretation of the texts of the Vedas. This is a matter for the expert Pandits, and it is sufficient to note that many competent scholars disagree with his interpretations. Now as to the Vedas themselves. The Hindus, in general, no doubt, believe in the revelation of the Vedas, but they hold they are without beginning and without end. Of course 'no books are meant by the Vedas but the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Only the discoverers of these laws are called Rishis.' Regarding all knowledge, whether secular or spiritual, the Hindu idea is that knowledge is inherent in man and that all learning is nothing but taking the cover off his own soul which is a mine of infinite knowledge. In many cases the covering is not completely removed, and all differences that are found among men are due to the differences in the degree of this process of 'uncovering.' To argue that a man has to be taught before he can know anything and deny, on this ground, the inherent nature of all knowledge seems to be illogical. For, all external aids are merely the suggestion or occasion which sets one to study one's own mind, and by a process of reasoning and rearrangement of ideas a further

advance is made in knowledge. As Swami Vivekananda beautifully expresses it—"Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man, and religion is the manifestation of the Divinity already in man."

Dayananda's declared object was to re-establish the Vedic religion. But strangely enough we are told that the Arya Samaj is opposed to Vedanta, and it calls it 'Neo-Vedanta.' We confess we are unable to understand what it could possibly mean. Quotations from Rig-Veda are given to support the view that God, soul and Prakriti are three distinct eternal and independent existences. We do not know how this could be reconciled with the clear and unambiguous teaching of the Upanishads of only One Existence except on the supposition that the Vedas do not represent one single perfected idea, but an ascending series of evolving ideas which finally culminate in the grand generalisation—"The Reality is one, though people call it variously." Throughout the Samhitas there are many examples of hymns sung in praise of different gods, Devas or the bright ones, but along with everyone of these gods is the idea of an Infinity. That is to say they begin as gods but are subsequently raised to a conception of the Being in whom the whole universe exists and who is the Ruler of that universe. The monotheistic idea of the Samhitas appeared to the Aryan mind as much too human and useless, and there is a struggle for a more philosophical and transcendental concept or idea until this culminated in the grand generalisation referred to above. Studied in the light of this evolutionary character of the Vedic conceptions, the finest flower of the Vedas is the Upanishads whose teaching is Advaita. Dayananda, in his 'Advaitavâda-Sameekshâ', in the 'Satyârtha-Prakâsh' gives the curious explanation that Sri Shankarâchârya in order to refute the Jains advanced the views which later came to be known as Advaita, and that if Shankarâchârya really believed in it himself, it was wrong. We are amused at this explanation of Shankara's views. Everybody knows that Shankara refutes not only the Jains but the Sankhyas, the Dvaitins, the Visishtâdvaitins and other

orthodox Vedic schools of thought as well ; also that his philosophical views and conclusions are not mere intellectual soundings but based on spiritual illumination and realisation, which could be the only satisfying test.

Regarding the existence of God as the Creator and Sustainer of this universe, 'the millions of the worlds hanging in space, our wonderful world teeming with life and animation, the wonderful tabernacle which man has been provided with' and such miracles are advanced as proofs. These are known in philosophical terms as the design theory. All that it can prove is that this external world requires a builder, but it could in no way explain this universe. Even this God, which the theory proves, after all turns out to be not very respectable ; for the materials of the world existed before Him, and He must be limited by these materials. For, He could only build what the materials enabled Him to do. That is to say, He is not only limited, but He is not even independent.

Dayananda laid much stress on the performance of Homa and held that no Vedic ceremony could be complete without it. The reasons which he gave for this ceremony were that man pollutes the air he breathes and soils the place he lives in, and that he should do something to purify and sweeten the air and the place. If these are the only reasons, we are surprised at the Samajist's persisting in wasting ghee, sugar, sandal-wood and other costly things, when modern sanitary science has devised so many cheaper and more efficient deodorants and disinfectants.

Whatever might be one's views regarding Dayananda's philosophical contribution, even the most partial of his followers and admirers cannot help regretting the fact that in attacking his opponents he had been needlessly severe, and we believe his cause would have gained rather than suffered had he adopted a gentler tone in his criticisms. We know that he is defended on the score of his having simply hated the sin but not the sinners. Even granting that such a fine and delicate distinction could have been made by him, there is no denying the

fact that such excuse could hardly be advanced by his followers when they imitate him in this respect. It is easy to talk of separating the sin and the sinner, but very few can realise it in practice. It amounts to distinguishing between quality and substance, and anyone who could do this would be a perfect man.

What is the attitude of the Arya Samaj towards politics? We find this question answered in the book, 'Swami Dayananda Saraswati—His life and teachings', published by Ganesh & Co. It says—"Has the Arya Samaj any political aim? As we have said elsewhere, the Arya Samaj is composed of mostly educated men ; and almost all of them are clear-headed, honest men, who do not entertain and cannot tolerate hypocrisy, double-mindedness and unreasonable views. It is this disposition which has made them leave the old fold and join the Arya Samaj. A clear common-sense is their fate. They know their numerical weakness. They know how they are regarded and looked upon by their neighbours of other persuasions. They know that their very existence depends upon and is due to the protection afforded by the British Government. And as clear-headed men they must know that any attempt to overthrow the British Government can only mean to them disgrace, disaster, suffering and total effacement. And if there is any body of workers in India that has done good practical work for the masses, it is the Arya Samaj. Is it reasonable to expect that such a body of sensible practical men should lend themselves to any illusion?" Regarding the nature of the British and their rule in India, we are told in the same book that 'for a long time the English were not desirous of dominion', that 'the English fought not so much with their swords as with their wisdom and beneficence, and they came just in time to rescue the country from anarchy and were, therefore, gratefully hailed as deliverers', that 'the new administration was characterised by honesty, truthfulness and justice', that 'Government was no longer weak, rapacious, arbitrary, irresponsible', that 'the servants of Government showed a sense of duty that was never observed before',

and that 'the greatest benefit that the British conferred was to give us education.' These quotations speak for themselves. Justice demands that due acknowledgment should be made of the praiseworthy change that has come over the attitude of some of the prominent leaders of the Samaj.

In biographies, one normally meets with some amount of exaggeration in the claims of their respective heroes and their achievements. In the instance before us the verdict of the biographer, even when due allowance is made for generous and liberal self-estimate, proves too much, for we ought to have reached the millennium already. For our part, we have no desire to grudge the Samajists their claim for glory. It might, however, prove instructive to examine in what respect and to what extent, if any, an ordinary Arya Samajist is superior to an ordinary orthodox non-Samajist. We shall suppose both of these are illiterate, and not much skilled in thinking and reasoning on such abstruse matters as the Vedas, God, the distinction between Sâkâr and Nirâkâr etc. In practice, what happens is this. The orthodox man believes in his Purohit and Panda, makes pilgrimages and worships in the temples and follows the leading of his caste elders. The Samajist, on the other hand, no doubt, does not go to the temples to worship the images, nor cares for pilgrimages and Shrâddhas, but he, too, has his temple—the Samaj Mandir, his images—the iron brazier and the Homa fire, and his pilgrimage—the various Gurukul Utsavas and anniversaries, where he pays his tithes etc. The educated and advanced thinkers, in both communities, no doubt display commendable force of character, courage of conviction, and zeal and enthusiasm for reforms. But the Arya Samajist reformers are not able to influence the less courageous and slow-moving bulk of the masses, as they have become a kind of a separate sect. Whenever the example of an Arya Samajist in breaking pernicious customs is pointed out, the ordinary orthodox man would simply reply—'Oh, he is an Arya Samajist and not one

of us, and so he might do anything. But I can't imitate him.'

Consciously or unconsciously, the Samaj, instead of becoming the one national universal religion (this is its claim) by fusing all the sects, has practically become a new and by no means popular sect of Hinduism. The reason for this is not difficult to seek. With the exception of their various educational and philanthropic works, the bulk of their Prachâr work has been devoted to violent criticism and destruction. Might we be permitted to make an earnest appeal to the Arya Samaj brethren to consider that Hinduism is broad enough to contain not only those that believe in the Vedas and one supreme God, but even the Sikhs, the Jains, and the Buddhists as well? Nor is idolatry in Hinduism compulsory at all. We have attempted to prove that, far from being a sin or a hindrance, image-worship is and might be a stepping-stone to a higher spiritual life. On all such questions as adult marriage, widow marriage, female education, untouchability etc., many Hindu associations consisting of all classes of men are doing excellent work. Also there is perfect unanimity about the removal of real abuses in the name of caste and religion. Except in the matter of the interpretation of the Vedas, Shrâddha and idolatry, which, we believe, are but minor considerations, the Arya Samajists have no valid reasons to hold themselves aloof. Higher national interests demand that all differences should be buried and all classes and communities should work shoulder to shoulder as comrades. In any Hindu revival, it is idle to hope that it will take exclusively the colour and form of any particular persuasion, as the Sanatanee, the Samajist etc. Not only this, but it must also become liberal and universal enough to tolerate and respect all religions of the world, with love and service as its watchword.

(Concluded.)

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## THE PAST AND THE PRESENT.\*

BY ERIC HAMMOND.

When one of Britain's hymn-writers sang, "Time! What an empty vapour 'tis!"—he expressed a thought which is both Christian and Vedantic. When the first phrase of an important notice affixed to the last December number of this periodical stated, "From January, 1925, begins the 30th year of the Prabuddha Bharata," the ephemeral quality of time was strongly accentuated. The years have indeed passed like a watch in the night, like a tale that is told.

It seems incredible that three decades have come and gone since Swami Vivekananda trod London streets and impressed large London audiences with his dignity, his eloquence and his spiritual fervour. Concerning the Prabuddha Bharata, one clearly recollects his enthusiastic preparations for its birth and upbringing. He emphasised the necessity for it. He prophesied about its utility and the momentous monthly message it would offer to the world. In the midst of one memorable discussion, his sense of humour prevailed over all seriousness, when he heartily laughed at the present writer's mispronunciation of the title of the proposed magazine.

Naturally, those who loved him and revered him, tried, after their poor fashion, to lisp Hindu words and sentences. Their first efforts usually proved more amusing to him than satisfactory to themselves. But he corrected them with extreme gentleness and courtesy—he whose command of English was nothing less than marvellous. He had taught them so much of his philosophy, encouraged their faint faith and lifted many of them out of the depths of fear and despair.

They, even then, could only dimly foresee the wonderful way in which his surety of unity would

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\* Written in December last.—Ed. P. B.

permeate the spoken and printed word of to-day, especially among English-speaking peoples. Then, thirty years ago, it was frequently remarked, "The Swami has cleared my thinking for me. Until he came, my religion was doubtful at best. The current opposition of the creeds left me unsatisfied and lukewarm. He showed me the underlying principle of all the creeds. Now, I find, in my customary form of religious expression, that there, too, is unity, and that all religion has one source, one centre and one circumference."

Pride of intellect fell before the supremacy of his intelligence. They who heard him, those thirty years ago, bring to mind his winged words, his stirring utterances, his unswerving belief, his entire certainty of the ground on which he stood.

The vast city of London, the meeting-place of all races, finds room, in the immensity of its embrace, for the exponents of every phase of religious and philosophical experience. Verbal tournaments constantly occur on its platforms and in the columns of its journals. Its pulpits are occupied by professors of this creed and of that. Missionaries from near and far attract great congregations, and the scope and method of all the various types of belief and unbelief are set forth. So much so is this the case that citizens of the metropolis often find themselves "consumed by things to do" and confused by things to hear. London is the centre of innumerable interests, sometimes converging, sometimes conflicting. Because of the very multiplicity of her affairs she is unable to concentrate, as perhaps she should, on vivid and vital matters. Political movements, mercantile adventures, imperial ideals, democratic pronouncements—all these, and more, clamour for her attention.

Thus, the Vedanta, expounded by its greatest advocate, Swami Vivekananda, was right gladly hailed by many of her residents and visitors. His speeches were acclaimed as inspiring and reviving. His meetings were crowded by enthusiastic listeners. It was conjectured by his adherents that his star would shine

resplendent over Great Britain and America and would, in effect, transform the religious outlook of the world.

That such a transformation has occurred, or rather is occurring, one cannot doubt. But the stream of its content has, for the most part, moved more silently than tempestuously. The thousand and one things to do and to hear that have arrested passing attention, have many of them, "had their day and ceased to be." Yet the sense of unity which impelled Swamiji and by which and for which he lived, spreads wider with the days and the years.

Writ large, so that they who run may read as they run, signs of that unity are everywhere perceptible, signs of a season when men shall no longer sow seeds of dissension but plant the healing herbs of wholesome spiritual agreement. Uniformity of ritual may, hardly, be anticipated, because men differ in temperament and in method. However different, they are advancing toward the knowledge that each flower of the field, with its various colouring and perfume, is fed and sustained by one life-principle. Faith, like the flowers, shows itself in many ways, but its essence, under each manifestation, is one, even though it be called by many names.

Schools of religious thought, accustomed to expressing themselves in rigid and unyielding forms, are searching for ways and means by which professors and students of one school may comprehend and appreciate the teaching of the others. As an immediate instance, we may note that a leading Nonconformist has recently preached in Canterbury Cathedral, and the Dean of Canterbury is advertised, by way of salutary exchange, to occupy a Free Church pulpit. This is a remarkable concession on both sides, since it implies an acknowledgment that conformity and non-conformity are, underneath the terms, fundamentally one.

It will be more encouraging still, when Western priests openly and frankly vocalise their indebtedness to Eastern origins. Slowly but surely the leaven moves. It is true, and, sometimes, it is depressing, that the

Prabuddha Bharata, as an example of oriental piety has but few subscribers in Great Britain. One wishes, with all one's heart, that thousands of copies were persistently demanded. When one remembers the floods of periodic literature that monthly and daily pour upon the people, one cannot be surprised.

"Hope on, hope ever," is a helpful and inspiring saying. One has to remember also, Swami Vivekananda's gracious attitude of self-surrender—"What matter if my name be forgotten! What matter if I pass out of the memory of men! My message can never pass away. In the Lord's own time it will replenish the soul of mankind. I shall escape from the bondage of my body, but the truth will prevail, and the word that I was born to proclaim shall be proclaimed."

His portrait, posed Buddha-like, reflects the sincerity, the irrevocability of his message. Calm, unshaken, possessed of infinite courage, infinite patience, he awaits the fulfilment of his vision.

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## MAHARANI SARAT SUNDARI OF PUTHIA.

BY AN ADMIRER.

*(Continued from p. 275).*

Maharani Sarat Sundari had a very tender heart, and she could not bear the sight of distress even from her early childhood. When she was in her father's house, she would seldom come to the Cutchery of her father, as such an ordinary occurrence as a severe rebuke to a tenant would make her burst into tears. On one occasion when a tenant was beaten by the orders of her father for some serious offence committed by him, she fainted away at the sight.

On the occasion of her Jagaddhâtri Puja every year, all the people of the locality were invited and fed sumptuously. Many Brahmins were engaged to serve in these feasts. At one of these Pujas a Brahmin was detected

stealing a large quantity of sweets, and there was a great row amongst the officers over it. Some were for giving him a good beating, others for fining him heavily and then driving him from the service. The matter eventually was brought to the notice of the Maharani Mata. She at once called the officers concerned to her presence and enquired of them if sweets were wanting to feed the people invited. On getting a reply in the negative, she, appealing to their good feeling, said, "The poor fellow is already mortified at being caught in the act of stealing. Why do you think of punishing him further? Moreover, the sweets were meant for feeding people. He has stolen them for no other purpose than feeding his wife and children. Just give him a little more and hush up the matter for God's sake. The row you have already made is a sufficient punishment for the poor fellow."

Her delicacy of feeling was simply admirable. At the time of her son's marriage, two girls, out of many inspected, were thought fit for final selection. They were both brought down to Puthia for the Maharani Mata's approval of one of them. When she had to reject one of these girls, she was much moved on her account, specially thinking of the feelings of her parents. She had her, therefore, married in a good family and most liberally bore all the expenses in connection with her marriage celebration.

Manomohan Kar, nephew of Radhikanath Bakshi, an officer of the Raj estate, read in the same class with Kumar Jatindra Narayan Roy. One day as they were playing cricket during the recess at school, a ball bowled by Manomohan hit the Kumar hard near one of his eyes. At this the Kumar lost his temper and abused him severely. The boy Manomohan, however, was not one to brook an insult. He threatened the Kumar, saying, "I shall just see to it when you go home from school." Now, when the school was over, the Kumar was being borne in a palanquin, escorted by two Durwans. Manomohan lay in wait on the path lying between two tanks, a little way from the school. As the Kumar's

palanquin approached him, the boy, with all alacrity, gave a hard push to one of the Durwans who fell down the steep bank of one of the tanks, and threw a handful of dust into the other's eyes. All this he did in the twinkling of an eye. Then finding the door of the palanquin open, he gave a few blows to the Kumar and ran away. The news of this assault on the Kumar was soon spread on the wings of the wind in a much exaggerated form, and the whole of the Rajbati was in a great commotion. Only the Maharani Mata had retained her calmness of mind. She summoned her son, the Kumar, to her presence and by means of questionings elicited from him the fact that he had been the first to give offence to Manomohan by abusing him when the ball had struck his eye. The Maharani took her son to task for abusing the boy for no fault of his, as the ball hit him accidentally. "Accidents are accidents, my boy," said she, "you did him a great wrong by insulting him for nothing. To-morrow when you go to school, be sure to get reconciled to him and play with him again. Otherwise, I will not touch any food the whole day." The Kumar did as he was bid by his loving mother, and she was greatly satisfied at it. Henceforth the Maharani Mata took a special care of the boy, Manomohan, and when once he fell seriously ill, she sent her Kaviraj, Dharanidhar Roy, to treat him carefully, so that the boy's life might be saved.

A certain property, Mehal Chatutia, in the district of Mymensingh, was bought by the Puthia Raj in partnership with Jahnavi Chowdhurani of Santosh. When the Maharani Mata was in Benares, the lady of Santosh was also there. The latter wished very much to enhance the rent of this new Mehal. But as that could not be done without the co-operation of her co-sharer, the Maharani, she went to pay a visit at her house at Howli Pande. After accosting each other as they met, the Chowdhurani laid before her the proposal for which she came. On this the following conversation took place between them : Maharani—Are the tenants of Chatutia well off, mother,

and will it not impose any hardship upon them if we enhance the rent?

Chowdhurani—Surely, mother, it must entail some hardship upon at least a section of the tenants. But the rate of rent of this Mehal is much below that of the surrounding ones.

Maharani—May I enquire, good mother, how many children you have got?

Chowdhurani—Alas! mother, I have no children but a widowed daughter-in-law and her only daughter.

Maharani—As bad luck would have it, mother, that is exactly the case with me also. But may I enquire what is the income of your estate?

Chowdhurani—Only about two lacs and a half yearly. May I know yours?

Maharani—Mine is a little more. But, good mother, may I ask you one thing? If we, with only so few members, cannot maintain ourselves properly with two or three lacs a year, how can the poor tenants do so with an infinitely smaller income, many of them having a lot of children to maintain? I, for myself, have no desire to enhance the rent. I think what we have got already should be sufficient for us. If our heirs and successors find it hard to pull on with this present income, they may do as they like.

Jahnavi Chowdhurani was not a little surprised at the line of argument the Maharani Mata had taken and went away without being able to convince her of the necessity of carrying out her proposal.

The Maharani Mata used to send out two of her most faithful maid-servants, Anna and Bishu Dasi, to enquire secretly and know which people had not enough to eat, who had not sufficient clothes, and which people were ill and had to go without medicine and diet for want of money. On learning the particulars from them, she made arrangement for meeting their respective wants.

The Maharani had a keen sense of justice and a well-balanced mind. Seldom was she found to strike off

any item of expenditure when accounts were submitted to her by the officers. But one day she did so regarding an item involving only eight annas. On being questioned by her Dewan as to why she was so particular about that insignificant sum, she replied, "As it is spent upon a commission in connection with my sister's property, it should, in all propriety, be charged to her estate. Why should my son's property be made liable for it?"

She was a great patron of learning. She made a liberal contribution to the Rajshahi College and maintained a Middle Vernacular School at Puthia and a Middle English School at Lalpur. Her generous contributions to various *tols* are also well known.

Apart from giving such helps to many poor students as the price of books and their University fees, she regularly supported a large number of poor students throughout their educational career. Most gladly she bore all their expenses in this connection. Verily she was a mother to them all, often enquiring about their wants and fulfilling them immediately. During the vacation she invited them to come and spend it at Puthia. At the time of going back to rejoin their institutions, they were provided with new cloths, wrappers and towels.

One of these boys was unfortunate enough to get plucked in the Entrance Examination two or three times. He then gave up his studies in despair and out of shame avoided the notice of the Maharani Mata. She, however, enquired about him through a son of her Dewan, Srijut Srish Chandra Majumdar, and on learning about his misfortune, asked him very feelingly, "Then what will become of this poor boy? Srish, can't you think of a plan by which he may be made a useful member of his family?" Srish Chandra then suggested that it would be useless for him to try any more for the Entrance Examination, but if she would bear the necessary expenses, he might join the Campbell Medical School in Calcutta and turn out a medical practitioner. Readily did she agree to it. The boy successfully came out of the Medical



School and earned his living by practising as a physician in his own village in Pabna.

She had a great sympathy for the education of women as well. When Srijut Srish Chandra Majumdar wanted to open a school for girls at Puthia, she gave her whole-hearted support to the scheme. But, owing to a vigorous opposition by the bigoted section of the community, it could not be carried out at that time.

Her liberality was wide-spread and spontaneous. Dr. Nishikanta Chatterji related that while he was in Russia, once he found himself in great straits for want of funds. He then remembered to have heard of the Maharani Mata's liberality and wrote to her asking for help. And he received the money asked for in Russia, sent by the Maharani Mata from Puthia.

Although she was a strict Hindu widow, she was never found lacking in making contributions to the building of a Brahmo Mandir, a Mosque or a Church, whenever she was appealed to for it.

A Mussulman tenant was once brought down to the Cutchery on a charge of cow-killing. He was heavily fined and confined in a cell underneath the Cutchery building. The matter at last reached the ears of the Maharani Mata. She at once called the Dewan to her presence and vehemently protested against their proceedings, saying, "I am very sorry that you have done such injustice to the poor tenant. He killed the cow for a religious rite. We Hindus sacrifice buffalo-calves and goats for religious rites and think nobody has any right to interfere in it. Then why should we not allow the Mussulmans to do as their religious injunction requires? Please see that in future no such injustice is done to anybody else."

A Brahmo gentleman once came to Puthia to preach his religious doctrines. Everywhere he met with a violent opposition, and nobody would receive him in his house. The Maharani Mata, on hearing this, sent for him, gave him quarters in the palace, allowed him to conduct his prayers in his own way and fed him sumptuously as long

as he stayed there. On coming to learn that the preacher was a vegetarian, the Maharani cooked some of the dishes with her own hands. It is said that the dishes served were so many in number that the gentleman could not get at them from his seat. A Brahmin attendant got them near him one after another.

She was seldom seen to touch coins with her hands. Only on occasions when her spiritual preceptor came to pay her a visit she would take gold coins in her hands, put them before his feet and lie prostrate before him as the Hindu custom requires.

She had correspondence with Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. His memorable measures for widow remarriage had the full sanction of her heart. She used to say that the measures, if properly followed, would put a stop to many a heinous crime in the Hindu society.

When the Local Self-Government Act was passed by the benign Government of Lord Ripon, she was the first to convene a meeting and express her great satisfaction at it. The meeting was presided over by her Dewan, and she with other ladies, watched the proceedings from behind a Purdah. The news of this meeting was first published in a weekly edition of the 'Bengalee'. Then the other newspapers followed suit and began to publish articles in praise of this act. When she heard of these, and of the news that Babu Ananda Mohan Bose had referred in glowing terms to this meeting of Puthia convened by her in his speech at the monster Town Hall meeting in Calcutta, she felt very much abashed. She always loved secrecy about good acts and was really annoyed at this trumpeting of her act.

The Maharani Mata had a great predilection for cloths made in her own country. The cloths she wore were made to order by her weaver tenants of Mymensingh.

Indeed the virtues of this good lady were many-sided and numerous. Had she belonged to the Metropolis, I am sure she would have been immortalised in various ways. It is greatly to be regretted that no complete record of her good deeds can be found now.

A short life has been written by Srijut Srish Chandra Majumdar. At first it appeared as a serial in the 'Bangadarshan' under the title of 'Raj Tapaswini'. Subsequently it was published in a book form by its author. Another sketch of her life was written by Srijut Girish Chandra Lahiri of Natore. Srijut Bhudev Chandra Mukherji had a great affection for this august lady and looked upon her as his daughter. He has also written a few pages about her in his book 'Sadalap'.

*(Concluded.)*

### MAMMON AND MARRIAGE.

The philosophy and religion of the Hindus are as broad, elevated and comprehensive as those of any other people in the world. The intolerance and persecution indulged in by the people of the West in the name of religion have never been heard of in India. But in social matters, the Hindus enjoy little or no freedom as compared with the Westerners. Almost in all phases of social life, customs which have long outlived their utility and purpose are blindly observed. It is this want of freedom and tyranny of tradition in social matters which baffle the attempt of the reformers.

Under the impact of Western civilisation, many institutions and traditions have begun to give way. Even while the old forms and observances are outwardly conformed to, the spirit has disappeared, and Mammon is the all-regulating factor in every aspect of life. The joint family, the relation of parents and their children and marriage are some instances in point. Commenting upon a vehement denunciation of the practice of demanding extortionate sums of money from parents of girls by the bridegrooms, the 'Indian Social Reformer' observes— "Unfortunately, however, the men who talk most of the spirituality of the Hindus have often the most materialistic and even degrading views of marriage, and it is such men who are largely responsible for the demoralising practice.

etc." The explanation for this must be sought in the fact that the Hindus have all along been conservative and hide-bound in social matters.

Regarding this practice of demanding money in marriage, in some cases by the bridegroom's party and in others by that of the bride, the truth seems to be that it has nothing to do with religion, culture or enlightenment. It is purely a matter of demand and supply. As the 'Reformer' itself points out, those who have received English education are most affected by this practice. For, the competition is very keen for bridegrooms possessing University degrees. Hence, it is but natural that the results are determined by the inducement of the highest bid. Almost invariably those very parents who suffered most from this form of evil in getting their daughters married never hesitate to extort the highest possible amount they can, in the case of their own sons. We refer to this not so much to justify the practice but only to draw the moral, viz. that it is a natural economic product of the highly inflated value set upon University degrees in the marriage market. This is bound to disappear as the value of degrees is considerably deteriorated in public services.

Whatever be the ultimate result, it behoves us to consider what steps should be taken to improve the situation. The advice of the 'Social Reformer' to parents of girls is to make a stand against extortionate demands and spend the money that would be required to buy a bridegroom in educating their daughters to fit them, if need be, to earn their own living. We are afraid that few parents have got so much enlightenment, and what is still more rare, the moral courage necessary to act upon this advice, and face the opprobrium of society in allowing their daughters to grow up unmarried. It must also be pointed out that in all the discussions of this question, the interests of the party most affected, viz. the girls, are more or less ignored. Considered purely from the point of view of the welfare and interests of the girls it appears to us that some such steps as the following will have to

be taken :—(1) The marriage of girls before they attain the age of majority and without their full and free consent should be discouraged. (2) The girls should have the same right of inheritance of their parent's property as the sons, if they remain unmarried, and half the share of the son in case of their marriage. With regard to the former, public opinion is not advanced enough to take it as within the range of practical politics. But, nevertheless, nothing short of this could effectively free the girls from the numerous disadvantages which they are labouring under according to the existing marriage system. The other suggestion has justice and equity on its side. Neither can there be any objection to this on the score of religion.

It is a notorious fact that the large sums of money which are extorted by the party of the bride or bridegroom, instead of providing a reserve fund for the married couple, are squandered away in all sorts of entertainments on the occasion of the wedding. Not only this but the advantages and security which the ancient practice of giving 'Stree-dhan' afforded have also disappeared. The conferring upon the daughters of the right of inheritance as enjoyed by the sons seems to us to be the only effective remedy for the many anomalies of the existing marriage system.

## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

### CHAPTER XVI

#### श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

य एतान्मत्पथो हित्वा भक्तिज्ञानक्रियात्मकान् ॥

श्रुद्धान्कामांश्चलैः प्राणैर्जुषन्तः संसरन्ति ते ॥ १ ॥

The Lord said :

1. Those<sup>1</sup> who discarding these three ways of devotion, knowledge and work taught by Me, feed through their restless organs their petty desires, pass on from birth to death.

[1 *Those &c.*—This is a class of utterly selfish people who are distinct from both men of realisation and the seekers after truth, described in the preceding chapter.]

स्वे स्वेऽधिकारे या निष्ठा स गुणः परिकीर्तितः ॥

विपर्ययस्तु दोषः स्यादुभयोरेष निश्चयः ॥ २ ॥

2. The steadfastness<sup>1</sup> to the duties of one's particular sphere is described as merit, and the reverse is defect. This is the criterion about them.

[1 *Steadfastness &c.*—i.e. no action is by itself right or wrong.]

शुद्धाशुद्धी विधीयेते समानेष्वपि वस्तुषु ॥

द्रव्यस्य विचिकित्सार्थं गुणदोषौ शुभाशुभौ ॥ ३ ॥

3. O sinless one, with a view to test<sup>1</sup> the fitness of things, purity and impurity, merit and defect, and conduciveness to well-being and its opposite are enjoined even with regard to things<sup>2</sup> of the same group, for the sake of piety,<sup>3</sup> of practice,<sup>4</sup> and of the maintenance<sup>5</sup> of life respectively.

[1 *Test &c.*—so as to put a check on man's natural proneness to them.

2 *Things &c.*—viz., place, time, things, agent, Mantra and action, dealt with later.

3 *Piety &c.*—e.g. pure things conduce to piety (by which formal religion is meant), and impure things to its opposite.

4 *Practice &c.*—In the absence of specific declarations, what great personages do is also right, and the reverse is wrong.

5 *Maintenance &c.*—One may have just as much of even a questionable thing as will save one's life, but no more.]

धर्मार्थं व्यवहारार्थं यात्रार्थमिति चानघ ॥

दर्शितोऽयं मयाऽऽचारो धर्ममुद्धतां धुरम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. For those<sup>1</sup> to whom piety is but a burden, I<sup>2</sup> have laid down the above rule of conduct.

[1 *Those &c.*—i.e. grossly selfish people.

2 *I &c.*—As Manu and other law-givers.]

भूम्यम्बान्यनिलाकाशा भूतानां पञ्च धातवः ॥

आब्रह्मस्थावरादीनां शरीरा आत्मसंयुताः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the five com-

mon factors of the bodies of all beings from Brahmâ down to a tree, etc., and they are equally connected with a soul.<sup>1</sup>

[1 Soul—so from both standpoints they are alike.]

वेदेन नामरूपाणि विषमाणि समेष्वपि ॥

धातुषूद्धव कल्प्यन्त एतेषां स्वार्थसिद्धये ॥ ६ ॥

6. O Uddhava, though their bodies are thus similar, yet for their<sup>1</sup> own good the Vedas have fashioned diverse names and forms for them.

[1 Their &c.—in order that they may attain the end of their life by regulating their propensities.]

देशकालादिभावानां वस्तूनां मम सत्तम ॥

गुणदोषौ विधीयेते नियमार्थं हि कर्मणाम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. O foremost among good people, with a view to circumscribe work I enjoin merits and defects regarding things in accordance with the exigencies of place,<sup>1</sup> time, etc.

[1 Place &c.—See note 2 on verse 3.]

अकृष्णसारो देशानामब्रह्मण्योऽशुचिर्भवेत् ॥

कृष्णसारोऽप्यसौवीरकीकटासंस्कृतेरिणम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. Of lands those that are devoid of spotted antelopes and where, in particular, devotion to Brahmanas is absent, should be considered as impure. And even if they are rich in antelopes, tracts designated as *Kikata*<sup>1</sup> and those that are not swept, or are barren, should be held as impure, unless<sup>2</sup> there be worthy people in them.

[The purity or impurity of the six items is set forth in verses 8—15, as helping piety.]

<sup>1</sup> *Kikata*—Probably Behar, the lower part of East Bengal and the northern portion of the Madras Presidency.

<sup>2</sup> *Unless &c.*—This in any case is the chief determining factor.]

कर्मण्यो गुणवान्कालो द्रव्यतः स्वत एव वा ॥

यतो निवर्तते कर्म स दोषोऽकर्मकः स्मृतः ॥ ९ ॥

9. That time is efficacious which owing to the abundance of requisite materials, or through inherent properties

of its own, is conducive to any particular work ; while that in which work stops<sup>1</sup> or is prohibited<sup>2</sup> is considered unfit.

[1 *Stops*—owing to the scarcity of materials, or for political unrest, etc.

2 *Prohibited*—by the scriptures. For example, those attending child-birth or death in the family.]

द्रव्यस्य शुद्धाशुद्धी च द्रव्येण वचनेन च ॥

संस्कारेणाय कालेन महत्त्वल्पतयाऽथवा ॥ १० ॥

शक्ताशक्ताऽथवा बुद्ध्या समृद्ध्या च यदात्मने ॥

अथं कुर्वन्ति हि यथा देशावस्थानुसारतः ॥ ११ ॥

10—11. The purity or impurity of a thing is determined by other things,<sup>1</sup> by the verdict of competent persons, by specific acts, by durations of time,<sup>2</sup> by its greatness<sup>3</sup> or smallness, by strength<sup>4</sup> or infirmity, by knowledge,<sup>5</sup> and by affluence<sup>6</sup> or otherwise. They bring demerit on a person according to place and circumstances.

[The purity or impurity of 'things' (the third item) is described in verses 10—13.

1 *Things*—coming in contact with it.

2 *Time*—e.g. rain-water collected in a tank is considered pure after the lapse of ten days. Food, on the contrary, loses its value on being stale.

3 *Greatness &c.*—e.g. a jar of water is easily defiled, but not a tank.

4 *Strength &c.*—Infirm people are generally made certain allowances over the able-bodied ones.

5 *Knowledge*—e.g. if a man comes to know of the birth of his son within ten days, he comes under the usual ban of uncleanness, but not after that period.

6 *Affluence &c.*—e.g. wearing tattered clothes will be wrong for a rich man but not for a poor man.

7 *According &c.*—i.e. under normal conditions. In exceptional circumstances the strictures should be relaxed.]

धान्यदार्वास्थितन्तूनां रसतेजसचर्मणाम् ॥

कालवाय्वग्निमृत्तोयैः पार्थिवानां युतायुतेः ॥ १२ ॥

12. The purity of corn, wood, bone,<sup>1</sup> textiles, liquids, metallic wares, skins and earthen things<sup>2</sup> is effected, as



the case may be, by time, air, fire, earth and water, either singly or in combination.

[1 *Bone*—such as ivory.

2 *Earthen things*—including unmetalled roads, mud, etc.]

अमेध्यलिप्तं यद्येन गन्धं लेपं व्यपोहति ॥

भजते प्रकृतिं तस्य तच्छौचं तावदिष्यते ॥ १३ ॥

13. That through which a thing coated with some impure stuff gives up its foreign smell and coating and returns to its natural state, is considered a purifying agency for that thing, and should be made use of till the desired result is produced.

[1 *That &c.*—Different means should be adopted according as it is made of wood, or metal, or cloth, etc.]

स्नानदानतपोऽवस्थावीर्यसंस्कारकर्मभिः ॥

मत्स्मृत्वा चात्मनः शौचं शुद्धः कर्माचरेद्द्विजः ॥ १४ ॥

14. Ablution, charity, austerities, ceremonies<sup>1</sup> and observances<sup>2</sup> performed according to stages of life and strength, and remembrance of Me, serve to purify a person. Thus purified, a twice-born<sup>3</sup> should perform religious acts.

[The means of purification for the agent are being described.

1 *Ceremonies*—such as the investiture with the holy thread.

2 *Observances*—such as evening prayers and meditation.

3 *Twice-born*—explained by Sridhara and other commentators as including the Sudra also.]

मन्त्रस्य च परिज्ञानं कर्मशुद्धिर्मदर्पणम् ॥

धर्मः संपद्यते षड्भिरधर्मस्तु विपर्ययः ॥ १५ ॥

15. The purity of a Mantra consists in its being duly understood<sup>1</sup>; that of work in being offered unto Me. The purity of the above six factors leads to piety, and the reverse of it to impiety.

[1 *Understood*—from a qualified teacher.]

(To be continued.)

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

**RAMBLES IN VEDANTA.**—By Rajam Aiyar. Published by S. Ganesan from Triplicane, Madras. Pp. 888. Price, Rs. 5/-.

This nicely got-up volume of about nine hundred pages is a new reprint of the contributions to the Prabuddha Bharata by its late gifted editor in the years 1896-1898. As the title itself shows, the book proposes to give in a popular, scientific method some idea about the philosophy and religion of Vedanta.

No logic-chopping or parade of intellectual gymnastic is there. The abstract theories that often appear to an ordinary intellect dry and stale, have been cleverly sauced with concrete illustrations, and there is a continuous supply of fables and anecdotes as well as actual incidents from the lives of saints and sages. As one goes through the pages of this volume, one finds that it is full of humorous touches as well as deep learning and study. We assure our readers that if they begin reading it, they will not be able to stop till they come to the end. The style of the writer is excellent, at once graphic, simple and forcible.

**IN THE HOURS OF MEDITATION (TAMIL).**—Copies can be had of Mr. K. Navoratnam, Sirampiadu Road, Jaffna, Ceylon. Price, Rs. 2/-.

This is a Tamil translation of the original book published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas. The printing is good, but the price is much too high.

**THE STORY OF SWAMI RAMA TIRATH.**—By Puran Singh. Published by Messrs. Ganesh & Co., Madras. Pp. 291. Price Rs. 3.

The story of the life-incidents of a saint is ever the source of unfailing inspiration to ordinary mortals who struggle to live the life of the spirit. It is specially true

in a place like India where religion forms the guiding force of individual and collective aspirations. In India men and women, whether young or old, idolise saints and shower over them their sincerest feelings of love and devotion. They turn to the life of a saint for help and guidance, and they find strength and peace which they seek.

Swami Rama Tirath was such a saintly character who now is being venerated as the poet-monk of the Punjab. He was a man whose one occupation in life was to attain the Supreme Bliss and share it with others. An apostle of Vedanta, he tried to live the highest spiritual ideal and realise the God-head, the Unity in variety. But unlike so-called Vedantists who talk of the unreality of the world and are unfeeling, dry intellectualists, he had a heart that was full of love and sympathy. Another peculiar feature that marked him out from ordinary Sadhus was his genuine patriotism. The political and economic salvation of the motherland was a theme that was dearest to his heart and, like the great Swami Vivekananda, he served the country as best as he could.

The volume before us records the impressions of a disciple regarding this great man, and we have no doubt that it will be welcome by all who love and admire the saint. The portraits and the collection of the letters of the Swami have made the book attractive.

## THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY.

In December, 1924, the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary completed its twenty-first year, and we have much pleasure in submitting a brief report of its activities during the period for the information of the public.

The Dispensary treated 55 indoor patients and 2,478 outdoor patients, making a total of 2,533, comprising men, women and children of different denominations. The range of diseases treated was varied. We omit details as superfluous.

Thanks to the generosity of some kind-hearted friends and sympathisers who contributed their quota through Swami Nikhilananda, the Dispensary has been able to tide over its extreme financial difficulty. Notable among these helpers are Their Highnesses the Thakore Sahebs of Limbdi and Morvi (who have promised recurring annual donations), and Seth Purushottamdas Kinariwalla of Ahmedabad. A complete list of acknowledgments has already appeared in these pages. Dr. P. Venkatarangam of Bangalore kindly presented the Dispensary with allopathic medicines and dressing materials worth several hundred rupees. We are deeply grateful to all these kind benefactors of the Dispensary.

The following is a summary of accounts for the year 1924 :—

#### RECEIPTS.

|                                    | Rs.   | A. | P. |
|------------------------------------|-------|----|----|
| By subscriptions and donations ... | 3,639 | 10 | 0  |

#### EXPENDITURE.

|                                                         | Rs.   | A. | P. |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------|----|----|
| Previous year's deficit ...                             | 434   | 13 | 2  |
| Doctor's maintenance ...                                | 240   | 0  | 0  |
| Medicines, allopathic and homœopathic, with freight ... | 378   | 11 | 9  |
| Expenses for collection of donations                    | 120   | 0  | 0  |
|                                                         | 1,173 | 8  | 11 |
| Balance in hand ...                                     | 2,466 | 1  | 1  |

It is sincerely hoped that the Dispensary will always receive the support of the generous public, so as to be placed early on a secure foundation. Contributions may kindly be sent to the following address.

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA,  
President, Advaita Ashrama,  
Mayavati, Dt. Almora.

## NEWS AND NOTES.

### DESHABANDHU DAS.

By the inscrutable laws of Providence, Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das was prematurely taken away from the scene of his earthly activities. The news was so sudden and unexpected that for a time it was hardly possible to realise that the great son of Bengal had really passed away. When the heart is full words fail. The sense of sorrow and grief has so overwhelmed the country that just at the moment it cannot realise what his death really means. Fate has, indeed, been very cruel to the country in snatching away the man who was one of its main supports, on whom it built its future hope. Specially at a time when India is passing through a great crisis, all eyes were confidently looking up to Deshabandhu to pilot the bark of the nation safely through all dangers and difficulties. But all on a sudden this untoward event happened to the great misfortune of the country.

The details of the life of Chittaranjan are too well-known to need any recapitulation here. His was a magnetic personality combining qualities that might be called rare in this world. The magnanimity of his soul, manifesting itself in a fervid patriotism, unbounded generosity, overflowing love of the poor and a keen sense of justice and fair play, deserves special mention. His heroic sacrifice for the sake of the country is a glowing tribute to his memory. It will remain fresh in the imagination of his countrymen and inspire them to higher and nobler ideals of life.

Renunciation is the crucial test of all greatness in man, and judged by this standard, not many have risen to the level of Deshabandhu's eminence. For his beliefs and convictions nothing was too costly for him. No amount of suffering, not even death, could force him to forsake the path of duty and truth. He was literally a poor man's friend. In his charity and benevolence he was most unostentatious. It may be truly said of him that his right hand did not know what his left hand gave.

He was a versatile genius. His forensic skill, his literary and poetic talent and his statesmanship were all of a high order, any one of which would have made his name worthy of being cherished by the posterity. Though brought up in luxury and imbued with the Western culture, it may not be known to many that he had rare piety and devotion.

In him his relatives have lost one who was nearest and dearest to them, his friends a warm and genial companion, his followers an inspiring leader, his colleagues a cheerful comrade and a resourceful ally, the poor a ready and helping hand and India one of her most valuable sons. May his soul rest in peace !

#### THE COW PROTECTION.

The hearts of all those interested in the protection of the cow and the improvement of the breed should feel considerably cheered and filled with new hope from the fact that Mahatma Gandhi has shouldered the responsibility of conducting the All-India Cow Protection Organisation recently inaugurated at Bombay. The provisional committee, we are told, have undertaken to enlist over 1200 members before the end of July. With a view, perhaps, to make it possible even for the poorest to become members, it has been settled that the subscription, which is Rs. 5 per year, may be paid in cash, or in the form of 2000 yards of hand-spun yarn per month.

In spite of the fact that for the majority of the people of this country, viz. the Hindus, the cow is an object of worship, "the cattle of India are miserable-looking, ill-treated, underfed, over-burdened, deteriorating and are even said to be a burden on the land. Nowhere else on earth are milch cattle led to the slaughterhouse, because they go dry long before they should. Nowhere else perhaps do cattle give less milk than they cost to feed and keep."

Although we believe that a spiritual outlook would help people to discharge more faithfully even their daily duties of life, the cause of cow protection should be

advocated on purely business, economic and national considerations. For the importation of passion, sentiment and religious prejudice into this question is likely to widen the breach between the Hindus and Muslims.

Until and unless every Indian could be convinced that it is more profitable to improve the breed of his cattle, and to feed, house and treat them well, instead of neglecting them or sending them to the slaughterhouse, mere appeal to the religious sentiment of the Hindus will not be productive of much good. Medical men have calculated that every individual for the replenishment of the body's waste needs  $1\frac{1}{4}$  seers of milk per day, and according to the 'Welfare' the people of Bengal scarcely get half a chhatak of milk a day. The low vitality of the people, the high rate of 'infant mortality' and the large rise in the number of wasting diseases etc. should in part at least be attributed to the deterioration of cattle in India. The intimate connection of the efficiency of cattle with the success of agriculture is too obvious to need any elaborate argumentation.

Let those who have reverence for the cow as a sacred animal, serve it as they ought to, consistently with their faith. But, for our own part, we would place before every Indian, whatever be his caste or creed, the imperative necessity of improving his cattle if he desires health, vitality and happiness for himself and his offspring.

#### THE BEGGAR PROBLEM.

India is the proverbial land of charity, and consequently the problem of pauperism and beggary, in the forms in which one meets with it in Western countries, is practically non-existent here. But with the rise and growth of overcrowded cities, the introduction of huge machines and the multiplication of mills and factories, the growing keenness of the struggle for existence, the depopulation of villages, the rise in prices and scarcity of foodstuffs and other similar conditions and features of modern life, we are now seriously faced with a growing menace of beggars, professional and otherwise. Already

in the provinces of Bombay and Madras, it has been found necessary to appoint committees to formulate proposals for the prevention of the beggar nuisance.

The first question that must be solved before any satisfactory solution can be arrived at is how far and under what condition is beggary sanctioned and approved by the various religions. According to the Committee recently appointed by the Corporation of Madras, although begging is permissible in the case of those Hindus who really renounce the world, the present methods of most of the beggars, which amount to a nuisance, are thoroughly unjustifiable. It is also pointed out that most of the beggars who assume a religious garb do so without any qualification and are also not under the control of any religious heads. The Hindu scriptures, no doubt, disapprove of indiscriminate charity, but popular sentiment rarely, if ever, discriminates. Regarding Islam, there is a difference of opinion, but there seems to be a preponderance against professional begging. The Committee is of opinion that any system of licensing religious mendicants, and State interference with private charity in places of public worship, bathing ghats, and in private houses is undesirable. Regarding able-bodied beggars, they suggest the establishment of a beggar colony or settlement, as to the infirm, special provisions for their treatment, and lastly regarding the juveniles, protection and training in a home of children.

In the great majority of cases, owing to numerous difficulties in earning an honest livelihood, begging offers an easy and ready-made solution, and popular feeling based upon mistaken notions of charity and religion, lends practical encouragement. Every one will readily admit that the most serious aspect of begging is not so much the waste of labour and energy as in the case of the able-bodied and juveniles, but the moral degradation and dwarfing of the human personality which begging engenders. We are, no doubt, aware that so long as any form of indiscriminate charity persists, it is bound to breed some kind of fraud and cheating, even



in the name of religion. But to suggest, as some advanced reformers do, that private homes and places of religious worship etc., should form no exception to prohibited areas of begging seems to us to go too far, and it would, under the existing conditions of society, even amount to an unwarranted interference with the rights of private individuals. Another fact to be remembered in this connection is that there does exist a class of genuine Sadhus, however much opinion might differ regarding their number and percentage. So long as a satisfactory test has not been devised to sift the real from the false Sadhus, a wholesale abolition of all forms of begging would mean an unjustifiable encroachment upon the rights and privileges of the most revered and useful institution of Sannyasins, monks, nuns, faquirs etc. With all their faults, this class of mendicants has been and is rendering much free service, and society cannot afford to be deprived of the services of this class, whose possibilities are unlimited.

#### THE BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA AT THE HINDU TEMPLE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, U. S. A.

The ninetieth birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on the 1st of March at the Temple with usual fervour and devotion. The life-size portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was decorated with evergreens and flowers. A special alter was erected for the occasion.

The morning service was conducted by Swami Prakashananda. It opened with a harmony of Sanskrit chants led by the Swami and followed by others. Then the Swami gave benediction and recited a soul-stirring song translated from Bengali, after which he delivered an illuminating discourse on Sri Ramakrishna.

The evening service was conducted by Swami Prabhavananda. After a chant and a song, the Swami spoke at length on 'Sri Ramakrishna—the Fulfilment of the Age' and thrilled the audience by his lecture.

Those who attended the celebration were much interested to hear about the life of the great Master.

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

28th December, 1920.

A householder devotee and a few Sadhus of the Mission were present before the Swami. The devotee was talking about the visions of his brother-in-law who used to see his chosen Deity in dream or meditation and was commissioned to worship his wife as mother. But the wife being of a different temperament would not let him do that.

The Swami addressing the devotee said—"Tell your relative to pray to the Lord, and He will change the mind of his wife.

"His work is going on all right. We know very little of His Lila. In how many ways does He help man and push him forward ! At first He presents supernatural phenomena before him and thus strengthens his faith. In short, whatever is done by Him is for the good of all."

Then the talk was about service. The Swami turning to S—— remarked—"To serve creatures as God is a grand thing. But only theorising about it will not do. It must be done practically, so that it may help one to the realisation of the Ideal—the manifestation of the Divine potentialities." And he went on—"Those who profess to be the children of Sri Ramakrishna must have Yoga, Bhakti, Karma, Jnana, nay, everything. For, Sri Ramakrishna stands for the synthesis and harmony of all religious paths. The spiritual growth of a person following a particular line could be seen in the past. But now one should have an all round development combined with a magnanimity of heart to tolerate others."

From this the conversation drifted on to self-surrender as a means to realisation. The Swami addressing N—— said—"We can perfectly be at peace if we can resign ourselves to the Lord. Let Him do what He thinks best. It is foolishness to dictate terms to Him as regards His dealings with us. Once you have surrendered yourself at His feet, there should be no room left for the assertion of your individual will. He knows what is best for you. Even if you pray for what is not desirable, He will do the right thing for you."

Then K—— of the —— became the subject of talk. The Swami remarked—"He is an excellent man, no doubt, but soft in nature." With reference to the hunger-strike of the members of the —— and the strong attitude taken by K—— as the head, the Swami expressed his joy and said—"I was so glad to hear of it. K—— acted rightly under the circumstances. Formerly he was so tender-hearted that he could not lead people under him. Now he is much improved. The boys who went on hunger-strike came to me in a party and said that they had not taken anything. It was about half past one. I told them all, 'Go, prepare Khichuri and eat. I will pay the expenses. But you must compromise with K——.' On enquiry I came to learn that one boy was at the root of the whole affair. The rest had practically no grievance. When K—— took a strong

attitude and stopped meal the whole batch that created trouble was in a fix."

At this N—— observed—"Yes, bullies are always cowards." The Swami also added—"Swamiji himself used to say that many times with regard to one of us. How many things did we learn from Swamiji!" N—— said—"To manage people one must be a little hard-hearted." The Swami rejoined—"No, one need not be hard-hearted. Internally there should be love, but to manage the work a show of strictness is necessary at times. Otherwise, the work suffers."

N—— said—"Had there been arrangements for a more systematic training of the boys, the task of management for a comparatively junior head would have been easier."

The Swami admitted and said—"Yes, training is what is extremely needed. But I believe everything will be all right in time. The angularities of a person are sure to be rounded by the inevitable knocks coming from nature. Is it not? If a man can stick to this life, the Lord will undoubtedly set him right."

Continuing he said: "—— has left. We hear he is going to America to learn Homœopathy. That he can easily do. But I am afraid he will not be able to prosper very much in life. For, he has no character. The life of a Sadhu and selfishness are wholly contradictory."

R—— turned the topic to the national movement of our country and the activities of the Congress and questioned the Swami about it. The Swami observed—"Where is the man who can lead the nation? Except Mahatma Gandhi I find none worth the name. सिरदार तो सरदार —'One who is ready to sacrifice himself can alone be the leader. A selfish man cannot lead. As to our national agitation I once asked Swamiji about it, and he feelingly said, 'What are these people doing! The mendicant policy followed by them will not do. You will have to earn what you want. Be fit, and you will get it.' It is only too true."

Then speaking about himself the Swami said—"If

I could meditate as I want, all my physical troubles would have gone. I know it from my personal experience. But the state of my present health will not permit me to do that. What can I do?"

Adverting to a new topic he said: "Most people are swayed by their wives. — calls one lady mother, whose husband also is henpecked. She came here several times. She is more of an intellectual than of a devotional type. — says that he has been much benefited by coming in contact with her. Whatever it may be, as for myself since my first visit to Sri Ramakrishna, I do not like the idea of a Sadhu mixing with women."

### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The industrial civilisation which rules the modern world has revolutionised every department of life. The phenomena of social life, even compared with those of a century ago, have not only assumed altogether new forms, but they have become very complicated and sometimes baffling as well. All observers of these new changes are agreed that there is a steady increase in crimes of all kinds. To take but one example, it is pointed out that "the American Bankers' Association, after careful study, appraises the losses from crimes against property alone as about \$3,500,000,000 per year. Credit men compute with considerable precision that credit frauds alone touch \$400,000,000, or more than a million a day, Sundays included." If the statistics of other countries are studied with reference to different decades, it will be found that the steady increase in crimes of various kinds is a characteristic feature of the age.



Numerous causes have contributed to bring about this unsatisfactory state of things. Obviously, it is impossible to make even a brief reference to all of them

here. We shall simply consider how far the current methods and theories of the punishment of criminals have succeeded, and also try to discover some of the causes of their failure. Far from succeeding to any extent, the orthodox methods are believed to put a premium upon crime. In the whole world until very recently and in some countries even to the present day, the *raison d'être* of punishments consists of vindictive, deterrent and reformatory elements. The entire civilised world will readily accept that the motives of revenge and retaliation are not only hateful in themselves but are bound to create more hatred and wickedness. For instance, capital punishment, all are aware, is usually defended on the score of deterrence. But we cannot help thinking that it is of the nature of a relic of the primitive rule of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.' Whichever be the case, judging by the results, no one can dispute the fact that failure is writ large upon the entire face of the current system of prisons and punishments.

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Dismissing the element of vindictiveness on the score of its being too harsh and antiquated and on account of the inherent impossibility of exact determination in individual cases, we have to examine how far reformation and deterrence are secured by the system in vogue to-day. If we remember that man is a personality with a will, end and aim of his own, the hope of any reform from the outside must be dismissed as a chimera. Especially when we remember that in reforming the criminals, coercion is the only method adopted, it must become obvious how all attempts in this direction are foredoomed to failure. We are now left with deterrence, and it ought to be the aim of all prisons and punishments.

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One general consideration that must be emphasised in connection with any scheme of prevention of crime is

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this. If a criminal does not get enough punishment, it is an evil. For, it encourages him to think that he can repeat his crime and escape with less than what he deserves. Under such conditions crimes instead of diminishing will increase. It is equally an evil when the criminal gets too severe a punishment as it would make him bitter and revengeful against society and the State. In this case also crimes would have a tendency to increase. All along the treatment of the criminal has been one of unmitigated severity, and it continues to be so even at the present day. When a criminal is sent to prison, he is not only deprived of his liberty for the term of his sentence; but he also has to carry the stigma with all its opprobrium and social disabilities to the very end of his life. One would consider this penalty as severe enough and more than what the requirements of the case would justify.



But what one actually sees inside the prison is something very horrible. If the truth in all its hideous aspects could be brought to light and the public be persuaded to learn and interest itself in the fate of the victims of this cruel system, we have no doubt that it would not be tolerated even for a day. Thus writes Thomas Mott Osborne, formerly warden of the famous 'Sing Sing' of America and known throughout the world as a bold reformer of intolerable prison conditions and as an author of some instructive books on prisons—"Brutal severity which has awaited men after they were locked behind the walls is not punishment but torture. By this I do not mean alone the flogging, the starvation, the more obvious physical tortures which have been and, in many prisons, are still practised, but others even more destructive of a prisoner's respect for society: the dreary monotony, the long hours of close confinement in small cells, the swarms of vermin, the system of silence, the repression of all natural instincts, the eternal espionage, the filthy food, the daily proximity to unnatural vice, the hourly danger

of insult and abuse, the vile language of keepers, the tyranny of intellectual inferiors, the indifference of wardens, the grievances unredressed, the sense of utter helplessness, the impossibility of being heard—the wonder is, not that so many men have gone insane in prisons but that so many have remained sane."

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The same writer describes how a man feels when he goes out of the prison, in the words of a prisoner who revealed his mind thus: 'I will tell you how I felt at the end of my first term. I just hated everybody and everything, and I made up my mind I'd get even.' It might be safely assumed that such must be the feeling of all prisoners who came out of prisons. If this is the reform which the prison system effects in the inmates, not only is there no safety for society, but crime instead of diminishing is also bound to increase. Prisons of the Middle Ages according to all accounts were the most perfect engines of cruelty, torture and every conceivable form of terror, and if even these have failed miserably, there is no sense in blindly repeating the folly of the past. As the prisons are constituted and managed at the present day, persons who are found guilty and sentenced, are confirmed in their criminal tendencies and instead of becoming useful citizens become a source of menace to it.

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Whenever reforms for a decent and humane treatment of prisoners are advocated, persons whose temperament leads them to suspect and dread any change in the existing order of things, turn round and exclaim if the hardships and unpleasantness and the stigma associated with prisons were removed, the prisons would become so alluring that even honest citizens might be induced to commit crimes just for the pleasure of being inside the prison. To persons of this class considerations of humanity, justice and fairness would carry no weight. The only means of convincing them is to show that the

State will be a gainer in pounds, shillings and pence as well. It is well known that an ex-convict finds it almost impossible to get a decent job for honest livelihood, partly because there is a *prima facie* ground for distrust, and mainly because nobody believes that the prison has effected any reform in his character. Under the circumstances, the ex-convict even when he has a mind to live straight cannot do so and is driven to crime again by sheer necessity and starvation. Therefore the goal at which all prison reform should aim is to bring about an actual improvement in the physical, mental and moral capacity of the prisoner and restore him to society as a useful citizen. Some of the suggestions that have been put forward by the American National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labour and other individual reformers have these characteristics in common. The prisons should be made in reality educational institutions, training the inmates in honest and useful pursuits of life. If this training is to bear any fruitful results, the prisoner should be given full wages for his labour and should be made to pay for his board, lodging etc. which he receives from the prison. He should be also made to contribute to his family, and the balance, if any, should be his own to spend as he likes after he is released.



It must be remembered that in order to make any reform successful the prisons, instead of being a costly ornament of the State as is the case to-day, should be run on sound business lines and be made self-supporting. Another important change on which almost all reformers are agreed is that the sentences should be left indeterminate, and that a classification of prisoners should be made into the normal and the defective, so that the former might be sent to industrial prisons or colonies and the latter to hospitals and asylums. Leaving the terms of imprisonment indeterminate would be too much of a shock to the legal and constitutional minds accustomed to courts and procedures. It must be admitted that this

would result in very far-reaching changes. The judge will have to be guided almost exclusively by the opinion of medical experts, and his sole function will be reduced to that of deciding whether the prisoner is to be sent to the asylum or industrial colony. If we rid ourselves of all sentimental cant of protecting society etc., the proposed changes need not present any very alarming prospect. In the case of the normal and able-bodied prisoners, it is of supreme importance that they should not be returned to society at large, until they have been sufficiently educated to lead a quiet, decent and honest livelihood. Such a necessity in the case of juveniles is already recognised in almost all countries, and children's courts and reformatory schools have been established. In the light of experiments which have proved to be remarkably successful, specially in America, the development of a healthy, useful and humane prison system should prove perfectly practicable. To all sceptics who would consider arguments like those advanced above as sentimental and visionary, we would urge that on grounds of public economy and practical politics, the conversion of the prisons into educational self-supporting institutions would mean a considerable relief to the poor tax-payers.



Modern investigations are said to have brought to light that there exists a definite criminal type of men, and just as some babies are born black and others white or fair at their mother's breast, so these persons have brains so incurably crippled that they would naturally be led towards murder. This opinion is advanced not by any sentimental philanthropist but by Dr. William J. Hickson, Director of the Psychopathic Laboratory attached to the Municipal Court of Chicago, one of the greatest courts of the world. After years of research and the observation of forty thousand criminals, Dr. Hickson claims to have gathered a mass of evidence relating to crime, heredity, and mental and emotional life of the habitual criminal, which, if true, must eventually revolutionise the attitude

of society towards the criminal. In a recent issue of the 'Forum,' there is an instructive article in which it is pointed out that it is possible to deduct the potential criminal and segregate him before he has had an opportunity to become an actual criminal. Dr. Hickson's conclusion that murderers and other dangerous criminals are mental defectives of a certain grade and suffering from *dementia præcox* and therefore are not accountable for their actions. This *dementia præcox* is explained as defective emotions. "It is a brain disease usually inherited and is incurable. People afflicted with it don't have the normal feelings of pity, kindness, love and so on." Permanent detention is therefore suggested as the only real solution of the problem, for, it is pointed out that neither capital punishment nor protection has proved effective. So long as this type of men are at large, society can never feel safe, and crimes also would continue to increase. The writer appeals for the segregation and confinement of defective and abnormal children before they have opportunities for committing horrible crimes, and quotes in support the example of Berlin where the defectives are caught in the schools and never allowed to be at large.



Mr. A. B. Goring, an English biometrist who has studied more than three thousand English convicts, writes thus—"On statistical evidence one assertion can be dogmatically made: it is that the criminal is differentiated by inferior stature, by defective intelligence, and, to some extent, by his anti-social proclivities; but that, apart from these differences, there are no physical, mental or moral characteristics peculiar to the inmates of English prisons." He also believes that environment plays a small part in the making of the criminal. Men go wrong chiefly because somebody gave them feeble bodies and minds. Another writer impugns the reliability of these conclusions of the psychologists and biometrists on the ground that the results are vitiated by the fact that the convicts in

the prisons are only the failures, while the intelligent criminal, because he always escapes the police and is so never caught and examined, and his type are quite unknown to these investigators. The very idea that there is a criminal type is disputed on the ground that crime varies according to climate, season and several other similar factors. By a wealth of statistics and illustrations from American conditions, the writer tries to establish that the prison population cannot represent more than one or two per cent. of the total of criminals and that the former are either juveniles or defectives, and therefore no very reliable or useful inference can be drawn about the possibilities or prevention of crimes. Even granting that a large majority of the criminals (the intelligent criminal as he is called) eludes detection and has therefore never been observed by scientists, the need for segregation, permanent detention, and medical treatment of defective and abnormal criminals which the psychologists advocate cannot be questioned.

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In India whether owing to the deep-seated religious instincts of the people or to the fact that the numerous phases of the modern industrial and materialistic civilisation have neither taken deep root nor reached any appreciable stage of development as in America and other countries of the West, the number of crimes in proportion to the population is fortunately not very high. Nor is the nature and magnitude of crimes so very scientific and ingenious as is the case with the more advanced countries. Nevertheless, that the conditions of our prison system are as degrading, irrational, futile and inhuman as in any other part of the world, is an undeniable fact. Whether such reforms as the picking out of the potentially criminal class, its segregation and permanent detention, and the awarding of indeterminate sentences to normal criminals and their education and training with a view to convert them into honest and useful citizens are found to be immediately practicable or not, it is high time that respon-

sible leaders and officials should study this problem in an impartial spirit. We believe that to the great advantage of the State as well as of the criminals a more humane and educational atmosphere might be introduced in the prisons of our county.

SEA-THOUGHTS.

Life is a restless sea,
And we, the waves thereof ;
The tiny waves, that look upon the sun
And shake their shining crests in foam and fun.

How to reach other waves?
(So near and yet so far ;)
I see one, with a jewelled crest like mine,
And try to move that way,—and make a sign.

But e'er we meet and mix,
It sinks, to rise elsewhere ;
And I sink too, to hide my salty tears,
And rise, to watch again ; so pass the years.

Life is a beauteous sea,
And we the waves thereof ;
But no waves meet, though they be side by side ;
Each flashes lonely, on a lonely tide.

O restless, glittering sea !
It *seemeth* thus ;—
Yet all waves find their unity below,
Where all is quiet, neither ebb nor flow.
And all souls find their unity in Thee,
Ocean of Love and Immortality.

ANNIE BEGG.

BEYOND THE SHADOWS OF MISERY.*

BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA.

Whoever has studied the phenomena of the universe has noticed that nature is bisected, as it were, by an inevitable dualism of opposing forces. In this world of phenomena there is, so to speak, a constant fight going on between these two sets of opposing forces. On the one side are manifest the signs of goodness, virtue, pleasure, health, life, love and everything that makes life sweet and worth living; on the other side, there is the expression of evil, disease, suffering, death and everything that makes life bitter, unhappy and miserable. Nature stands before us with a smile on her lips as well as a frown on her brow. This dual aspect of nature nobody can deny, and we all experience the one or the other in every moment of our earthly existence. Whenever nature showers her blessings on us we feel ourselves extremely happy, but the next moment when she frowns at us we experience the terrible aspect and feel ourselves extremely miserable. This is the way nature has been expressing herself since the very beginning of creation, and her course is perennial.

Attempts have been made everywhere and in every country and in all ages, since the dawn of human intelligence, to avoid misery and attain everlasting peace and happiness. In fact, if we study all the different religions of the world, we find all of these have one goal—the complete cessation of miseries and the attainment of everlasting peace and blessedness. Howsoever the various religions differ in dogmas and creeds, they are at one in pointing out the goal as a state of existence where end all miseries.

And is that not the cry in all human hearts? From the depths of misery and degradation there arises that hankering in every human heart to go beyond them. Who

* A lecture delivered at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, U.S.A.

could live even for a moment if there was no hope of getting beyond miseries? The nights of shadow and darkness must break off, and there will come the light of day—that is the hope, the longing, we all live in. Though we see disease, death and misery around us every moment of our life, still there is an innate belief in the brighter side of human nature—in life, health and happiness, which cannot be shaken off.

Which is the ultimate reality, life or death, happiness or misery? Our very life, our very existence gives an answer to this question. Once a sage asked the great king Yudhishthira, "What is the greatest wonder in this world?" And the king replied, "Though we see every day people dying around us, we cannot believe that we shall ever die. This is the greatest wonder." And this is also a most wonderful truth. Can you ever imagine, can you ever think, though you see the body dissolving away, that you are going to be non-existent? No, you cannot. That is a logical impossibility. You can never think that the continuity of your existence will ever be broken. Does that not show that you are immortal by your very nature? And that immortality itself is God.

Does not every moment of your life prove that you are living for happiness? Does not your life show that you are always in search after happiness? You may struggle towards it for ages, you may be always running after the mirage, yet you cannot give up this quest. All this proves the nature of your soul as blissful. And bliss is God. Similarly, we have the thirst for knowledge and more knowledge. We cannot remain satisfied with little, finite knowledge. And knowledge itself is God.

In Vedanta, God has been defined as Sachchidananda, Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge and Absolute Bliss. That God is the Self of all, the Innermost Being in every one. Consciously or unconsciously, we are all struggling to manifest that God in us. Vedanta explains this life of ours. According to it these life-struggles of ours have that one purpose—the manifestation of Sachchidananda. Every one is trying to do that.

I do not believe there can be really any atheist. Do you believe in happiness? If you do, you believe in God. Do you want to live for eternity? Then you want God. Do you want to have knowledge and more knowledge? Then you want God. Thus everyone believes in Sachchidananda. His very life shows that. But religion begins when that struggle becomes conscious and we progress towards the goal knowingly.

So long as we are unconscious of the struggle, we move in a wrong way, we misdirect our energies, our struggles and hopes. As it is impossible to find immortality in the body, for you are not the body, so is it impossible to find happiness from nature, from the universe. As I have already explained, we all seek happiness, we are always in search after happiness. But we are vainly seeking that in this universe.

There are sects amongst the Christians who believe in the idea of a *millennium*. They believe that there will come a time when good and good alone will exist in this universe. Then there will no longer be any misery. However comforting this idea may be, it does not stand to reason, and however we may try, we cannot get unalloyed happiness in this universe. For, what makes this universe? Relativity. If there remains good and good alone in this world, it is no longer the world. It is the Absolute. Good and evil, pleasure and pain, are like the two sides of the same coin. You cannot take one while refusing to accept the other. If you want happiness, you have also to take the other side of it—misery.

No, that happiness, that peace that passeth all understanding, cannot be gained in this universe of relativity, in this world of the senses. The world will ever remain as it is, for its course with its dual aspect is everlasting. But the individual souls will manifest that bliss, that happiness, by freeing themselves from nature.

The cause of ignorance and misery is our identification with nature. We have forgotten that nature exists for us and not we for her. The bee came to suck the honey, but its feet got stuck therein. That has been the

case with us. We came to gather experience from nature, so that ultimately we can free ourselves from her. But instead we have become slaves to her. गारुपे सुखमस्ति भूमेव सुखं — "There is no happiness in this world of finitude. The eternal bliss is in the Infinite." This is the great lesson we have to learn in life.

Upon the same tree there are two beautiful birds of golden plumage, one on the top, the other below. The one on the top is calm, silent, majestic and immersed in his own glory. The other below is eating sweet and bitter fruits, hopping from branch to branch, and is happy and miserable by turns. After a time, the bird on the lower branch tastes an exceptionally bitter fruit and being disgusted looks up and sees his companion, that wondrous bird of golden plumage. The latter eats neither the sweet nor the bitter fruits of the tree, and is therefore neither happy nor miserable, but calm and self-centred. The lower bird longs for that enviable condition, but soon forgets and again begins to eat the fruits of the tree, hopping from branch to branch. In a little while, he eats another exceptionally bitter fruit which makes him feel extremely miserable, and he again looks up and tries to get nearer to the upper bird. Once more he forgets, and after a time he looks up. So on he goes. At last he comes very near to the beautiful bird on the top and sees the reflection of light from his plumage playing around his own body, and he feels a change and seems to melt away. Still nearer and nearer he approaches, till everything about him melts away, and he becomes merged in the other. Now he realises that he himself was in essence the upper bird all the time, the lower bird being only the shadow, the reflection of the upper one.

This eating of fruits, sweet and bitter, and becoming happy and miserable by turns is a vain illusion, a dream. All along there has been only one bird, calm and silent, glorious and majestic, beyond grief, change and decay. And this one bird is God, the Lord of the universe. The lower bird is the individual soul, eating the sweet and bitter fruits of this tree of the world. Now and then

comes a heavy blow, and he stops eating and goes towards the unknown God. Yet again the senses drag him down, and he begins as before to eat the sweet and bitter fruits of the world. Again an exceptionally hard blow comes. His heart becomes open again to divine light. Thus gradually he approaches God, and as he approaches nearer and nearer, he finds his old self melting away. At last he realises his blissful, all-knowing nature and becomes free from the bondages of the universe.

This is the way to go beyond the shadows of misery and attain to blessedness. It is to go to the very centre of our being which is Sachchidananda. The Soul of our souls, the Reality which is our very essence, is that eternal, ever blessed, ever free and ever pure Atman. We must know that. This knowledge will lead us beyond death where there will be an end of all of our misery. "He who sees that One among the many, that Unchangeable Being in the universe of changes, he who realises Him as the Soul of his soul—unto him belongs Eternal Peace—unto none else."

To see Him you have to close your eyes, to hear His voice you have to shut your ears. He is there within, calling us all the time, "Come, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest and peace." But we are not ready to hear His voice. We are still eating the sweet and bitter fruits of the world. The voice is ringing within, "Give up all the external formalities of religion and follow Me. I will relieve you from all distress, from misery and death. Do not grieve. I am ever present with you." But we turn a deaf ear to His voice, because we are still busy with the playthings, the toys of the universe.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Mother gives toys to the children to play with, and the children forget the mother busying themselves with the playthings. But as soon as they are hungry or thirsty, they throw away the toys and cry for the mother and she immediately appears before them." So give up these playthings of the world

and cry for the Mother of the universe, and She also will appear and give you rest and peace.

Let us drink of the cup of divine love, the cup of true knowledge, and we shall get Immortality. When the hands work, let the mind rest at the lotus feet of the Divine Mother, let the lips utter Her name. Think of this Ideal, and dream of it, until it becomes the bone of your bones and the flesh of your flesh, until all the hideous dreams of littleness, of weakness, of misery, and of evil have entirely vanished. And no more will the Truth be hidden from you, even for a moment.

YOGA.

BY SWAMI ADWAITANANDA.

We are living in an age which is in the throes of a great travail. It is a veritable cauldron in which all traditional modes of thought and activity are cast, tested, torn to pieces and recombined for a fresh term of existence. Nature's workings display two main tendencies. At the outset every form has a leaning towards harmonised complexity. Then it breaks up into various specialised formulations which again revert to the original totality. Secondly, although development into forms is an imperative necessity for effective manifestation, all such forms stand in need of perpetual revivification. Indian Yoga stands in the same category. The time has now come when it should rediscover its truth of being, and in the light of this self-knowledge recover its original synthesis.

The progressive manifestation of Divinity in man depends upon two successive elements, mind and body. Nature has evolved for us the bodily life. Here she has successfully achieved a certain stability of form which is steady and sufficiently pliable and mutable to provide a fit dwelling-place and instrument. The fable in the Aitareya Upanishad which tells us that the gods rejected

the animal forms which were offered to them but willingly accepted the human form, conveys this very idea. The mental life is in the process of evolution. In man we have not got a single mentality but a multiple one, the sensational mind, the emotive mind, the thought mind and the volitional mind. According to our ancient thinkers, man is essentially a thinker, the mental being who rules the life and the body and not the animal who is led by them. True human existence, therefore, begins only when we free ourselves from subjection to the material mind and begin to live in the mind independent of nervous and physical obsession. This kind of mental life is not a common possession. It is not yet as firmly based as the bodily life. But the whole trend of modern movement clearly reveals the fact that an earnest effort is being made to universalise the opportunities for its growth. By the spread of education, by the multiplication of labour-saving appliances, by trying to ameliorate the economic condition of the masses and by giving them sufficient leisure for intellectual and cultural development, an attempt is being made to give the whole of mankind facilities for full intellectual and emotional growth.

Even when all these conditions are satisfied and the great endeavour has found its base, Eternal Peace, mastery, freedom cannot be had, because man is not merely a thinking animal. He is the Self—unchanging, all-powerful, omniscient and all-pervading. The existence of the Self is self-evident. It does not need the conception of any other thing in order to be conceived. Nothing can be conceived without presupposing the existence of the Self. It is the absolutely independent underlying principle. No man can conceive his own annihilation. If this is the nature of the Self, certain consequences inevitably follow. It must be infinite, self-caused and self-determined. Individuality or personality cannot be ascribed to the Self, for these imply determination and limitation. The assertion that such a supra-mental life exists is the very foundation of Indian philosophy. Its acquisition and organisation is the one objective which

Indian thinkers have placed before humanity, and this is what is called Yoga. In the language of Yoga, mind is simply an instrument like the body. The only essential requisite for the possession of this Divine Life is absolute elimination of egoism, the total abolition of the sense of 'I and mine,' the eradication of the feeling of identification with the internal and external instruments, the mind and the body. Divine existence, then, which does not reject but returns upon the material instruments and liberates them into their highest possibilities, is the true aim of Yoga.

If we look at the workings of nature with an observant eye, we find that all life is either a conscious or a sub-conscious Yoga. By Yoga is meant a systematised effort towards self-perfection, "by the full expression of all latent potentialities of our being. The whole universe is a vast Yoga in which Nature attempts to realise her perfection in an ever-progressive gradation. She has given the capacity for conscious understanding of her ways only to man, her thinker, so that he can understand her purpose, her ways of work and attain the goal with a swift and puissant movement. An earnest endeavour, therefore, after a careful consideration of ways and means, can compress one's evolution into a single life or a few years or a few months of one's bodily existence. This will obviate the necessity of following Nature in her leisurely movement. If we adopt this view of Yoga, it ceases to appear as a "monstrous aberration" or as some thing abnormal or mystic, which has no relation to the ordinary processes of the world-energy. On the other hand, it reveals itself as an intelligent, intense and exceptional use of the powers and forces she has already manifested and is progressively organising in her less exalted but more wide-spread operations.

In physical knowledge the multiplication of scientific processes has its disadvantages. It developes artificiality which places our natural human life under a load of machinery and thus purchases certain limited forms of freedom at the price of an increased servitude. The

same is the case with complicated Yogic processes. The Yogin tends to draw himself away from the common stream of collective life. That is the reason why a sharp incompatibility has been created in the Indian mind between the worldly life and the Life Divine. The tradition of a victorious harmony still remains. There is an innate belief that a mental cleavage between Spirit and matter is unjustifiable and cannot stand the test either of reason or of experience. But this belief is not powerful enough to disabuse the mind of the idea that to escape from life is the general object of Yoga. In this modern age, which is pre-eminently an age of synthesis, as is evident from the writings of the best thinkers, poets and artists of the world and also from the fact that discoveries in physical science have brought the whole world together, and united the East and the West in inseparable physical bonds, no view of Yoga can be satisfying which does not unite God and Nature in a perfect and liberated human life. In its method also it must not only permit but favour the harmony of inner and outer activities. Avoidance of the life which is given to us by Nature cannot be either the indispensable condition or the ultimate object of our endeavour or the most effective means for self-fulfilment. We achieve our true object when our conscious Yoga becomes like the sub-conscious Yoga in Nature, outwardly coextensive with life itself. That is the only view of Yoga which can appeal to the modern mind. The attainment of internal perfection in and through the world by the elimination of egoism, by the removal of ignorance is our goal, and nothing short of it. Lop-sided development can never be the objective of a thinking being.

THE PARIJATA FLOWER.

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA.

"In whatever form a man seeks to worship Me with faith, in that form I make his faith firm and unflinching."

In ancient times in a village in Bengal a pious Brahmin and his family lived a happy, simple life. They were of the old orthodox type, devoted to each other and to God. The wife worshipped her husband, the husband cherished his wife, and the children, two boys, honoured their parents. The door of their little cottage always stood wide open to friends and strangers alike. Under their hospitable roof any belated wayfarer was sure to meet with a hearty welcome, and no beggar ever was turned away disappointed.

When a wondering monk happened to pass through the village and halting at their door in the name of God called for alms, the boys would run to their mother and say, "Mother, a Mahatma has come. May we give him food?" "Yes, my children," the mother would reply, "offer it with reverence. May the holy man bless you." Then the boys carrying a little rice and lentil soup would place it respectfully in the cocoanut-shell that was held out as begging bowl, and the monk blessing the children would pass on.

Thus, smoothly life moved on. The gods being pleased bestowed on the family not only a fair measure of prosperity, but also an abundance of mutual contentment. Now it happened one day that the Brahmin after his early-morning devotions went to the village market to buy fish for the midday meal. Squatting on the ground behind their baskets the fisherwomen with loud, rancorous voices cried, "Fish! Fish! The best in the market!" One woman, the most vociferous of all, seeing the Brahmin, hailed him with, "Oh Brahmin! Where are you going? Come, and buy from me!"

The Brahmin smiled, and halting at her basket after examining her catch, struck a bargain. Now, when the fish was being weighed he noticed with horror that against it on the balance was placed a Salagrama—a sacred stone used in worship as an emblem of Lord Vishnu. Filled with indignation he upbraided the woman for her sacrilegious conduct of profaning a sacred symbol of the Lord. But he found her quite ignorant of the meaning of the Salagrama, and when he offered to buy it she was willing to let him have it for next to nothing, as any ordinary stone of the same weight would serve her purpose equally well.

The Brahmin reverently carried the Salagrama to his house where he purified it by bathing it in milk and Ganges water. Then he began to worship Vishnu in the stone as Brahmins do throughout India.

That night he had a dream and with the dream a vision. Lord Vishnu stood before him. "My Lord!" the Brahmin exclaimed in great joy, "what have I done to deserve the honour of your visit to my humble hut?" The Lord smiling sweetly in a very gentle voice, said, "Good Brahmin, don't you know that I bring many afflictions to those who worship Me? By depriving them of worldly happiness I draw their hearts closer to Myself and fill them with the spirit of renunciation." Then the vision vanished.

The Brahmin awoke. He was not a little puzzled by the strange message of the dream. A strain of sadness mingled with his joy, for he was not quite willing to have the flow of his peaceful life interrupted by calamities. On the other hand, he knew very well that it was his duty as a Brahmin to worship the Salagrama.

At last he decided to be true to his faith, and morning and evening he worshipped placing flowers and fragrant sandal on the stone after having washed it with holy water, uttering Vedic texts as he did so. And he burned before it incense and a little light in honour of his God.

This went on for some time. Then one evening at

the hour of dusk his little son came running home from the woods crying, and showed on his foot two tiny spots, where a venomous adder, stepped on unwittingly, had left his deadly marks. A few hours later the child expired in his mother's arms.

The lifeless, little body was carried to the cremation ground. When the last flames of the fire were extinguished, the stricken parents carried home a casket with ashes, all that was left of their darling, sometime to be consigned to the tender care of Mother Ganges, the holy river, in whose embrace the remains of so many pious Hindus find final rest.

The father remembered the vision. But faithfully, though with an aching heart, he continued to worship the Salagrama.

Now it happened that a few days later cholera broke out in the village, and among the first victims of this dreadful disease was counted the other son.

"Thy will be done, oh Lord!" the Brahmin sighed with a trembling heart, and he continued to worship the Salagrama. But the bereaved mother utterly disconsolate at the loss of her two boys died of grief.

Now, the Brahmin well-nigh gave in to despair. He had no one left. His cottage was empty. No child's laughter to cheer him, no tender word of welcome when he entered his little home. On his bed his weary eyelids closed, but he could not sleep. Days and nights were to him like so many ages. Then, one night when he was dozing a little he was roused by a voice. "Good Brahmin," the voice spoke, "don't you know that I am the friend of those who possess nothing—of those who have resigned themselves entirely to Me?"

Hearing these words a great peace entered his desolate heart. Lord Vishnu had taken his all, but He had not forsaken him! With a hopeful mind he rose, and at early dawn, taking with him the Salagrama he left his cottage. In the forest he made for himself a little shelter near a pond, and there he gave himself entirely to God and devoted all his time to worship.

Sometimes a great pain would steal over him, a feeling of anguish, an uncontrollable longing for his departed ones. But then he remembered the sweet voice, "I am the friend of those who possess nothing—of those who have resigned themselves entirely to Me." The Lord was his Friend, He surely would not forsake His beloved ones. And with fervour renewed he worshipped the Salagrama.

Now one morning when after his ablutions he was occupied with his devotions near the pond, a slight disturbance in the water attracted his attention. There was a bubbling sound, little ripples formed, and these increased into waves, till the entire pond became a mass of commotion. Astonished and hardly able to believe his eyes, he watched. Then to the surface came a bright, golden figure of shining beauty. The figure approached, and before him stood a celestial nymph. Her voice was like music as she addressed him softly with the words, "Holy Brahmin, your faith is unparalleled. As reward I have brought for you a Parijata flower. It comes from Vishnu's garden. No such flower ever before has come to earth." Then dropping the flower in his lap, she vanished.

Examining the flower, the Brahmin thought, "This certainly is a divine creation. No flower of this world can compare with it in beauty of shape and colour, and the fragrance it emits is exquisitely delicate. But what shall I do with it? Let me take it to the king, for it is more fit to embellish a palace than my poor, little forest-hut." Accordingly he took it to the king, and then returned to the woods and his devotions.

Now, the king had two wives, and as he had only the one flower, he gave it to the elder queen. At this the younger queen became jealous and angry. Locking herself in her room she began to weep. The king tried to explain matters, but she would not listen unless she also got a Parijata flower as beautiful as that of the elder queen.

The king, at his wits' end what to do, at last

summoned his minister and told him to go to the Brahmin and order him to bring another Parijata within twenty-four hours. If he disobeyed, he would be beheaded.

The poor Brahmin receiving this order, greatly frightened, betook himself to prayer. Then in the midst of his supplications he was startled by a voice asking him what he wanted. Opening his eyes he saw the same celestial nymph.

"You are the cause of my impending death," the Brahmin exclaimed. "Unless you give me another Parijata I must die!"

"But that is impossible," the nymph replied. "Indra gave me that one flower once when he was greatly pleased with me. These Parijatas are exceedingly rare even in heaven."

The Brahmin, however, continued to plead with her most earnestly. Then, at last, she said, "Well, I will take you to heaven. Ask Indra himself."

Now the Brahmin all of a sudden found himself in Indra's presence. Being asked by Indra what he wanted, he told his story.

"But," said Indra, "I cannot procure another flower. These Parijatas belong to Vishnu. Ask him."

So the Brahmin went to Vishnu. He found his Lord seated on a throne of glory, surrounded by a galaxy of angels bright as the midday sun. Half blinded by this heavenly sight he threw himself at Vishnu's feet. With choking voice he told his Lord what had happened, and prayed to be delivered from his impending doom.

Vishnu coming down from His throne and gently touching the prostrate body of the Brahmin said, "My child, I am pleased with you. I have watched your long and fervent devotions as you worshipped Me in the Salagrama. Rise and come with Me to My garden. I will give you many flowers."

The Brahmin beholding the Lord's sweet, smiling face felt comforted. Rising to his feet he followed Vishnu. They came to a garden-gate, and entering the

Brahmin was overwhelmed with joy seeing the beauty of this paradise. His body became light as air. He moved without effort. An ethereal atmosphere seemed to fill and sustain him. He felt ecstatic. Birds were singing their heavenly songs as he passed by trees and plants laden with fruits and fragrant flowers. Shining, smiling faces greeted him on all sides. He was in the land of the spirits.

On a velvety lawn a beautiful boy was playing with a deer. "There," the Lord said pointing to the child, "is one of My Parijata flowers." The boy looked up, and seeing the Brahmin came running towards him with outstretched arms. "Father!" he exclaimed, "have you come at last? Lord Vishnu told me every day that you would soon be coming. Now we are together again. I am so happy!" Then, from behind a bush another boy came running—the Brahmin's eldest son. A little farther on he came upon his wife. "These," the Lord said, "are my Parijata flowers." Thus, the family was happily reunited in Vishnu's heaven.

"Inscrutable, oh Lord, are Thy ways," the Brahmin said in great humility and joy. "My apparent misfortunes were but angels in disguise."

And Vishnu, in the words of Sri Krishna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, said, "No one who practises virtue, My son, comes to an evil end."

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN.

All the great religions of the world have taught that love is the supreme goal of life, and that every man should love his neighbour as his Self. Notwithstanding all these, the history of the world is a dismal record of cruel oppression of the weak by the strong, of the unprivileged by the privileged. Until recent times all the powerful tribes and races who were acting on the principle, 'might is right', never attempted to disguise the fact that

they had no moral justification for their conduct beyond their superiority in brute force. The civilised nations of the present day have beat their ancestors in their vandalism. Of course, there is a difference in their *modus operandi*.

The conquerors of the past had perhaps no scruples in cutting off the heads of the defeated people, but the moderns will not tolerate such clumsy methods. They will be satisfied with nothing but the conquest of the soul of their victims, and this too on a plea of doing good to the latter. To help them in these diabolical schemes, pseudo-scientists have done and are doing their bit by prostituting pure knowledge to unworthy ends and purposes. For many years past scientists of a class have been singing praises of the pre-eminence of certain races and of the inherent inferiority of certain others in point of *progress and enlightenment*, and they are of opinion that Providence has left it to the white races to civilise the coloured people.

These and other similar shibboleths with the *imprimatur* of science, have been found very handy as a convenient cloak for jingo imperialists and capitalistic groups out for world markets. Before the whole world has scarcely had time to recover from the staggering blow which was struck at her by the last great war, mischief-makers are already afoot, and one hears the cry of wolves on all sides. It is perfectly natural for imperialistic nations and capitalistic combinations to resent any and every expression of independence and freedom of thought and raise false alarms.

What is still more insidious and which therefore acts as a deadly poison upon the minds of most of the common people is the race antagonism with the consciousness of arrogant superiority of one's own blood and the consequent contempt of others. Instances of this phenomenon are to be found everywhere. The cry of the 'Black Peril' and the 'Yellow Peril' is a typical instance of the egotistical and inebriated mentality of the white races which bodes ill for the future peace of the world.

Unless a quick and healthy revolution is brought about in this state of things, neither will there be any burden for the white man to shoulder, nor will the white man himself survive the inevitable cataclysm.

Apart from the consideration of the probable ultimate consequences that any race conflict would lead to, one might profitably pause to examine, what basis of truth, if any, could be found for the current notions of the superiority of some races over the rest. Mr. Albert A. Hopkins, associate editor of *'The Scientific American,'* in a recent issue of that journal, discusses the origin of the different races, the relations and essential differences between them, and lastly whether the Nordic are really better or worse than the dark-white races. Although certainty on such matters is for obvious reasons impossible, from a study of the discoveries about ancient pre-historic humanity gathered from the excavations and museum studies of the last four decades he draws some interesting conclusions—

"The first is that there is no such thing in the modern world as a pure-bred race. The 'pure Nordic' idea is a myth. The second is that not one scrap of real evidence exists to prove that any one race is potentially abler or more honest or more intelligent than any other race. The *white man's burden* may be laid down any time with a clear conscience and with no fear that we are deserting our duty to the world. The third is that racial mixture—even to what we would shrink from as extremes—seems much more likely to be beneficial to civilisation than the reverse."

The writer further argues that races have originated by the slow alteration due to climate and other circumstances, of successive migration waves out of Asia, that black men were the first, and that for more than a hundred centuries the world has been a laboratory for mixing and blending races. The comparative study of Professor Roland B. Dixon of the Harvard University of all the available human skulls has led to the conclusion that "every race, no matter in what part of the world,

showed evidences of mixture of other races." The most important inference which the learned writer adduces is this—"To talk of menaces in racial mixture is equally absurd. If racial mixture could have ruined mankind that ruin would have been completed many millenniums before any scribe set down one word of history. Indeed, a degree of racial mixture seems actually stimulating of human intelligence and human enterprise."

If these conclusions cannot be proved with absolute certainty, neither is there any possibility of disproving them altogether. On an impartial view of the case there is this much at least which admits of no possibility of doubt, namely, that the alarm of race peril has no foundation upon facts. Still, if the cry is raised, it is capable of only one explanation that unscrupulous and interested persons find it a convenient mask in the pursuit of their nefarious plans for the subjugation and exploitation of weaker peoples. Lovers of world peace and human brotherhood can do no better than expose the hollowness of these false alarms to achieve their cherished ideals.

Another interesting line of argument is adopted by Mr. H. G. Wells to prove the solidarity of the human race and expose the myths of racial antagonism. In his *'First and Last Things'* which is virtually a confession of his own faith, he speaks of the slow unfolding in man of a sense of community with his kind, of a synthesis of the species. The greatest obstacle to this consummation is the sense of separate individuality which he ranks 'among the subtle inherent delusions of the human mind.'

Mr. Wells puts forward as a hard fact the following—"We, you and I are not only parts in a thought process, but parts of one flow of blood and life.* * * Disregarding the chances of intermarriage, each one of us had two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, and so on backward, until very soon, in less than fifty generations, we should find that, but for the qualification introduced, we should have all the earth's inhabitants of that time as our progenitors. For a hundred generations it must hold absolutely true, that everyone of that

time who has issue living now is ancestral to all of us. That brings the thing quite within the historical period. There is not a western European palæolithic or neolithic relic of the present human race that is not a family relic for every soul alive. The blood in our veins has handled it. * * * *Our individualities, our nations and States and races are but bubbles and clusters of foam upon the great stream of the blood of the species, incidental experiments in the growing knowledge and consciousness of the race."*

Against the possible objection that until recently humanity has been segregated in pools and been growing without admixture from other streams of blood, he suggests that in the remote past isolated individuals out of adventure, from shipwrecks, capture, etc., would have provided the channels for the intermingling of the various races. Turning to the future also the possibilities of admixture are more likely and easy than in the past in view of the ever increasing facilities of communication and such similar factors. Even the desire to found a family and the love of descendants seem to afford no very solid foundations to build upon. In the inimitable words of Mr. Wells—"One's son is after all only half one's blood, one's grandson only a quarter, and so one goes on until it may be that in ten brief generations one's heir and namesake has but $\frac{1}{1024}$ th of one's inherited self."

Any hoarder of wealth for the sake of children and descendants, if he would only give free play to his imagination, could realise that in a few generations, those who bear his name and lineage might conceivably possess very little of 'his self,' while his real offspring gets mixed with that of the people he most despised and wronged and *vice versa*. Even biologically, there seems not much basis for the belief of the common people to think of their children as their very own, beloved of their blood and bone of their bone. We are told it is not the individual that reproduces itself, but the species through the individual.

Hence all boasts of superiority of some races over the

rest and the consequent inhumanity of man towards his fellows are not only dangerous to the future progress and well-being of humanity but have also not a shred of reason to back them up. To give up this superstition of separate and distinct races is the only rational solution of the most serious of all menaces that threaten the world at the present day.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from p. 328.)

क्वचिद्गुणोऽपि दोषः स्याद्दोषोऽपि विधिना गुणः ॥

गुणदोषार्थनियमस्तद्विदामेव वाधते ॥ १६ ॥

16. Sometimes a merit even turns into demerit, and a demerit into merit by virtue of an injunction. Thus the regulation with regard to merit and demerit merely annuls their distinction.

समानकर्माचरणं पतितानां न पातकम् ॥

औत्पत्तिको गुणः सङ्गो न शयानः पतत्यधः ॥ १७ ॥

17. The doing of the identical deed¹ is no sin in the case of those already much too degraded; while association with the opposite sex is allowable to those² to whom it is in order. A man already lying low on the ground can no more fall.

[1 Deed—i.e. evil deed.

2 Those &c.—i.e. householders only.]

यतो यतो निवर्तेत विमुच्येत ततस्ततः ॥

एष धर्मो नृणां क्षेमः शोकमोहभयापहः ॥ १८ ॥

18. From whatever¹ one abstains, one gets rid of that. This is the righteous conduct that leads to the well-being of men and removes their grief, infatuation and fear.

[1 *Whatever &c.*—Hence the scriptures only advise the restricted exercise of our lower tendencies with a view to get rid of them finally.]

विषयेषु गुणाध्यासात्पुंसः सङ्गस्ततो भवेत् ॥

सङ्गासत्र भवेत्कामः कामादेव कलिर्नृणाम् ॥ १९ ॥

19. By ascribing¹ worth to sense-objects a man comes to be attached to them ; from attachment arises the desire for them ; and desire leads to dispute among men.

[The path of enjoyment is condemned in Slokas 19—22. Compared Gita II. 62-63.]

¹ *Ascribing &c.*—fancying it where there is none. The real source of Bliss is the Atman.]

कलेर्दुर्विषहः क्रोधस्तमस्तमनुवर्तते ॥

तमसा ग्रस्यते पुंसश्चेतना व्यापिनी द्रुतम् ॥ २० ॥

20. Dispute engenders vehement anger, which is followed by infatuation. Infatuation quickly overpowers his hitherto abiding consciousness of right and wrong.

तया विरहितः साधो जन्तुः शून्याय कल्पते ॥

ततोऽस्य स्वार्थविभ्रंशो मूर्च्छितस्य मृतस्य च ॥ २१ ॥

21. O noble soul, when a man is deprived of this consciousness, he becomes almost a zero. Like a man in stupor or half-dead, he then misses the end of his life.

विषयाभिनिवेशेन नात्मानं वेद नापरम् ॥

वृक्षजीविकया जीवन्वयथं भस्त्रेव यः श्वसन् ॥ २२ ॥

22. Engrossed in sense-objects, he knows neither himself nor the Supreme Self, but vainly lives a vegetative life and breathes but like a pair of bellows.

फलश्रुतिरियं नृणां न श्रेयो रोचनं परम् ॥

श्रेयोविवक्षया प्रोक्तं यथा भैषज्यरोचनम् ॥ २३ ॥

23. The Vedic passages treating of fruits of work¹ do not set forth the highest well-being of man, but are

mere inducements²—like those for taking a medicine—spoken with a view to lead people to their highest good.

[1 *Work*—i.e. work done with selfish motives.

2 *Inducements &c.*—As a child is induced to take a bitter medicine by promises of candy, and obtains as a result much more than the candy, viz., recovery from his illness, so people are led by means of these tempting prospects to Self-realisation which confers liberation.]

उत्पत्त्यैव हि कामेषु प्राणेषु स्वजनेषु च ॥

असक्तमनसो मर्त्या आत्मतोऽनर्थहेतुषु ॥ २४ ॥

24. Men are from their very birth attached to sense-objects, to things affecting their physical welfare, and to their relatives,—all of which are but sources of danger to them.

न तानविदुषः स्वार्थं भ्राम्यतो वृजिनाध्वनि ॥

कथं युञ्ज्यात्पुनस्तेषु तांस्तमो विशतो बुधः ॥ २५ ॥

25. How can the all-knowing Vedas again recommend sense-enjoyment to people who, ignorant of their true well-being, wander in the paths of enjoyment, only to enter into deeper gloom,¹ and who submit² to the guidance of the Vedas themselves?

[1 *Deeper gloom*—as they more and more lose sight of the ideal.

2 *Submit &c.*—who believe in the portion of the Vedas dealing with work and cite it as the basis of their conduct.]

एवं व्यवसितं केचिद्विज्ञाय कुबुद्धयः ॥

फलश्रुतिं कुसुमितां न वेदज्ञा वदन्ति हि ॥ २६ ॥

26. Certain fools,¹ not knowing this trend of the Vedas, speak of the flowery descriptions in them of the fruits of work as all in all. But the real knowers² of the Vedas do not say like that.

[1 *Fools &c.*—A fling at the Mimāṃsaka school who advocate work.

2 *Real knowers*—like Vyasa and others.]

कामिनः कृपणा लुब्धाः पुष्पेषु फलबुद्धयः ॥

अग्निमुग्धा धूमतान्ताः स्वं लोकं न विदन्ति ते ॥ २७ ॥

27. People hankering after desires, mean-spirited and avaricious, who mistake flowers¹ for fruits, are deluded² by work performed with the help of fire, which but leads to the Path of Smoke,³—and never know the truth of their Self.

[¹ *Flowers &c.*—passing states for the abiding Reality.

² *Deluded &c.*—A reproduction of the Sruti passage : "Some departing from this world realise their identity with the Self, while others do not know the truth of their Self, being deluded by work &c."

³ *Path of Smoke*—the Pitriyāna, leading to the Lunar Sphere, whence at the completion of their term of enjoyment they are reborn on earth.]

न ते मामङ्ग जानन्ति हृदिष्यं य इदं यतः ॥

उक्थशस्त्रा ह्यसुतृपो यथा नीहारचक्षुषः ॥ २८ ॥

28. My friend, though I am in their heart and am the cause of the universe and its essence, yet they do not know Me, because¹ they only talk of work and seek to satisfy their senses,—as is the case with those who have been blinded² by a fog.

[¹ *Because &c.*—An echo of a well-known verse from the Samhita.]

² *Blinded*—i.e. for the time being.]

ते मे मतमविज्ञाय परोक्षं विषयात्मकाः ॥

हिंसायां यदि रागः स्याद्यज्ञ एव न चोदना ॥ २९ ॥

हिंसाविहारा ह्यालम्ब्यैः पशुभिः स्वसुखेच्छया ॥

यजन्ते देवता यज्ञैः पितृभूतपतीन्खलाः ॥ ३० ॥

29-30. These cruel people addicted to the senses, not knowing My covert import that if¹ one has a natural craving for killing animals, then he may satisfy it only in sacrifices, and that it is never an injunction,—revel in such killing and for their own pleasure worship the gods, the manes and the leaders of ghosts by means of animals slaughtered in sacrifices.

[¹ *That if &c.*—that these are merely permissive measures and are not to be confounded with obligatory duties.]

(To be continued.)

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

FOREST MEDITATION.—By James Cousins. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 64. Price, Rs. 2.

Mr. Cousins, the well-known writer of several volumes of English prose and poetry, has lately brought out this booklet of 23 poems. The book perhaps derives its name from the fact that some of the poems therein were written in the secluded atmosphere of hills. A deep religious fervour runs through many of the poems, and we are sure they will give pleasure to every imaginative mind. The writer, 'questing for the mystery voluble in brook and tree,' brings 'hints of celestial happenings,' for those who have not the good fortune to get at them. Some of the poems are of occasional interest.

BUDDHIST STORIES.—Translated from the Pâli by F. L. Woodward, M.A. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 140. Price, Re. 1.

The book contains 26 stories culled from the Buddhist scriptures. The translation has been very lucid, and the style delightfully simple. As it is illustrative of the ethics of Buddhism, the book will be appreciated by many.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SWAMI ABHEDANANDA (Part I).—Published by the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 383. Price, Rs. 3.

This is the first volume of the Complete Works of Swami Abhedananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. It contains three series of lectures which were formerly published in separate book-forms as '*Self-knowledge*', '*Reincarnation*' and '*Divine Heritage of Man*'. Besides, four single lectures have been added in the volume. Hitherto the lectures and writings of the

Swami were published in costly editions in America with prices which were too high for the average reader of our country. So the Madras Ramakrishna Math has done well to undertake this task of publishing a cheaper edition of the works of the Swami that was a long-felt want. Perhaps two more volumes will come out to complete the series.

WOMEN OF INDIA.—By Swami Vivekananda. Published by the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 24. Price, As. 3.

A lecture delivered by the great Swami at the Shakespeare Club House, Pasadena, California, U. S. A., hitherto unpublished in India. It is an illuminating discourse on the problem of Indian womanhood and its ideals.

KATHA UPANISHAD.—By R. L. Pelly, Vice-Principal, Bishop's College, Calcutta. Published by the Association Press, 5, Russel Street, Calcutta. Pp. 73. Price not mentioned.

As is mentioned in the preface, this venture has a practical motive behind it. The Katha Upanishad has been prescribed as a set book for Christian students preparing for the Serampore degree of Bachelor of Divinity. They require a text-book which will expound the Upanishad with reference to Christian thought, and this book aims at meeting that need. It contains the original Sanskrit text, a small introduction, the English translation of the verses and notes.

THE HISTORY AND INSTITUTION OF THE PALLAVAS.—By C. S. Srinivasachari, M.A. Printed at the Wesleyan Mission Press, Mysore.

A pamphlet briefly describing the history of the Pallavas and the culture of their age. It forms part of a series of articles on 'The Evolution of Political Institutions in South India,' appearing in *'The Young Men of India.'*

SREE KRISHNA'S MESSAGES AND REVELATIONS.—By Baba Bharati. Published by G. A. Natesan and Co., Madras. Pp. 79. Price, As. 8.

The admirers of Baba Bharati will like this little book containing words of supreme wisdom.

E. S. MONTAGU—A STUDY IN INDIAN POLITY.—Published by G. A. Natesan and Co., Madras. Pp. 84. Price, As. 8.

Here we get a brief account of the career of Mr. Montagu, specially with reference to the growth of the Indian constitution. There are in the book extracts from the budget speeches, the report on constitutional reforms in India, etc., of the great statesman, and they add to its value.

THE APOSTLES AND MISSIONARIES OF THE NAVAVIDHAN.—Published by Niranjana Niyogy from 3 Ramanatha Mazumdar Street, Calcutta. Pp. 72. Price : Cloth-bound Rs. 5 ; Paper-bound Rs. 3.

This nicely got up volume is an album containing the portraits and life-sketches of some of the prominent missionaries of the New Dispensation Church inaugurated by S. Keshava Chandra Sen, the great religious reformer. It will, indeed, be welcomed by all who are interested in the Navavidhan Samaj. The publishers hope to bring out next a companion volume that will contain the biographical sketches of some of the lay devotees of the Navavidhan.

REPORTS AND APPEALS.

The Twenty-third Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Hardwar, for 1923.

The report is a good record of the service rendered by the Sevashrama to suffering humanity—pilgrims and people of the locality who need help in the shape of medical or other relief. The total number of persons treated in the outdoor and the indoor hospitals came up to 19,310. A comparative survey will show the progress of the work from 42 indoor and 178 outdoor patients in the first year of its existence to 553 indoor and 18,757 outdoor patients in the year under review. Besides this work of nursing and medical relief, the Sevashrama has been conducting a small free night school for the education of the poor depressed classes of the place.

The total receipts during the year, including the balance of the previous year, were Rs. 26,101-10-0, and the disbursements were Rs. 13,242-7-0, leaving a balance of Rs. 12,859-3-0. The usefulness of a humanitarian work like this is obvious, and we hope our generous countrymen will continue their liberal support to keep it agoing.

The Sri Ramakrishna-Sarada Peetha and Sevashrama, Amlagora Garbeta, (Midnapore).

This Sevashrama, started in 1916 by a monk of the Ramakrishna Mission, has been doing much to relieve the sufferings of the poor people of the locality by giving gratuitous medical help to all. It also organised temporary relief works in connection with the influenza epidemic of 1920 and the Silavati flood of 1922. Recently a day school styled as the Sri Ramakrishna-Sarada Peetha has been started for the education of the local boys. The idea of the authorities is to see that this school may gradually evolve into an ideal institution where boys may

receive academic education up to the Matriculation standard as well as training in agriculture and home industries along with moral and spiritual growth.

The immediate needs of the school are : (i) a boarding house accommodating at least fifteen students, (ii) a Pukka well, (iii) a library and (iv) general equipments. The authorities have got a gift of about 24 bighas of land in continuation of the plot already occupied by the Ashrama, as well as promises of materials required for the erection of a one-storied Pukka building. Now a sum of Rs. 3,000 is urgently needed to finish this building as well as for other necessary works.

All contributions will be thankfully received by the Secretary of the Sri Ramakrishna-Sarada Peetha and Sevashrama.

- *The Sri Ramakrishna Mission Branch Centre, Koalpara, Kotalpur (Bankura).*

Since its foundation, this Centre has been silently doing its work of great usefulness in many lines in an out-of-the-way place like Koalpara. Among other things, the educational department under it deserves special mention. It has been conducting a school which gives practical training in spinning, weaving, agriculture and the like, along with the usual literary education of an elementary type.

The weaving institute established in 1906 has brought out many young men expert in spinning and weaving, some of whom are now independently earning a descent livelihood by running looms, while the others have settled in different parts of the country and are conducting similar institutions for the training of people. But unfortunately on account of the paucity of its funds and the great strain upon its limited resources, the mother institution at Koalpara has run into a debt of over a thousand rupees. Hence it is now dragging on its work miserably.

In these days of great economic stress, the usefulness of an institution like this need not be told to any one. We hope our generous countrymen will come forward with their liberal help and save the institution from the imminent death with which it is faced. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully accepted and acknowledged, and they should be sent to Swami Keshavananda, the monk in charge of the Centre, or to Swami Saradananda, the Secretary, R. K. Mission, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

NEWS AND NOTES.

WILL WARS COME TO AN END?

During the last few years the number of writers who preached various plans for ending wars has been increasing. To the practical politician and others who have had occasions to suffer by the stern realities of life as they are at the present day, these attempts appear like those of the mice in the fable, who all met in a grand assembly and resolved upon belling the cat. As the stray old mouse in the assembly raised the question, "Who is to bell the cat?" all the members began to scratch their heads, and the meeting came to nothing. Looking at the achievements of the International Court of Arbitration and the League of Nations, notwithstanding a few minor and insignificant results, no solution as to who is to bell the cat has so far been found.

However much one might be dissatisfied with the past, there is no denying the fact that unless some device is discovered to make future wars impossible, all progress of civilisation in the world will not only get a serious setback, but its very life will be endangered. For this very reason we, for our part, most gladly welcome every suggestion towards this end. In *'The Modern Review,'*

Mr. Wilfred Wellock contributes a thoughtful article on 'How to end war.' He believes that owing to scientific advancement there is enough production to satisfy all people of the world, and consequently war which was once found necessary for want of sufficient food, can no longer be justified on this score. Similar is the case with regard to wars on account of religion. It is not necessary to go into the detailed history of the various phases through which war has passed.

Although the writer recognises that apart from the past historical reasons of war the imperialistic or capitalistic interests might bring about a conflagration, he believes that wars may be eliminated by the realisation of certain principles on the part of the individuals of each country. The suggestions are:—(a) We must have a strong intention to have nothing to do with war ; (b) we must organise the international control of the earth's raw materials for the common good of mankind; (c) we must develop the League of Nations into an all-inclusive League of Peoples; (d) we must establish a series of Labour Governments throughout the world ; and (e) we must attempt to bring about a total disarmament of the different countries of the world.

Regarding these suggestions this much would be conceded by all impartial observers that if any nation could be induced to adopt only this last suggestion a great step would have been taken towards world-peace. The writer is optimistic enough to expect that some one of the powerful nations of the world will be heroic enough to totally disarm itself, and set a noble example to the world. With our own faith in humanity and its unlimited possibilities, we cannot see anything impossible in his hopes, and the disinterestedness, bravery and self-sacrifice which individuals all over the world have always exhibited and do exhibit even now, have only to be carried into the realm of practical politics and international relations.

THE SOUL OF JAPAN.

Time was when students of Japan, especially, Indian observers, were so captivated by her sudden and dramatic rise in power and glory that they were scarcely able to distinguish between the elements of strength and of weakness. Very soon the inevitable reaction followed. Critics after critics came out with predictions of various calamities to Japan such as the loss of her soul and distinctive culture and so forth.

One of the most sympathetic and most friendly of these critics, Poet Rabindranath Tagore, tells us that it was during his first visit to Japan that the thoughts contained in his '*Nationalism*' came to him, because it was in Japan that he, for the first time, came in contact with the spirit of 'the nation' in all its naked ugliness. The Poet even now finds 'in the Japan of to-day a history of violence in her politics, an unscrupulous greed in her commerce, and an undignified lack of reticence in her public life.' Nevertheless, he is of opinion that all these characteristics have not as yet taken deep roots in the inner being of her people.

If one studies the real heart of Japan, one meets everywhere with wonderful works of art, codes of honour and ideals of perfection and grace in the details of her daily life. In spite of appearances which are by no means encouraging and hopeful, the Poet feels sure that Japan has the promise of a great future. During his recent visit to Japan, he has observed certain characteristic truths in the Japanese race pregnant with hope and promise.

One such is that 'the whole people of the land should come to have a hunger for the beauty that is serene and great, that has no appeal to their sensual excitement—a beauty with which, in the busiest time of the day, they could steep their mind, and thus realise their freedom in the Infinite.' A striking instance of the fine gift of enjoyment (a sight almost rare in any other part of the world) even the most ordinary people exhibit is afforded by the following—"On every Saturday and Sunday, men, women

and children would crowd through the different alleys and avenues of pines and oaks, threading their way to some open space in the mellow light of the afternoon. There was no sign of rowdyism, no trampling of grass or plucking of flowers, no strewing of the forest path with peel of bananas, skins of oranges, or torn pieces of newspaper. There was no unseemly scene, no brawling drunkenness, no shrieking laughter, no menacing pugnacity."

According to Tagore, Japan's mission to the world is to prove that science and art can be combined and be made to reveal the mystery of beauty, the best expression of reality. In spite of all ominous signs, he expresses his hopes of the future of Japan thus—"The ugly spirit of the market has come from across the sea into the beautiful land of Japan. It may, for a time, find its lodging in the guest-house of the people ; but their home will ultimately banish it. For it is a menace to the genius of her race, a sacrilege to the best that she has attained and must keep safe, not only for her own salvation, but for the glory of all humanity."

THE CINEMA AND THE RISING GENERATION.

The famous plant wizard, Luther Burbank, in an article on modern American youth, which is reproduced in a special supplement of the 'New India,' observes that they feel restless and prefer to be in almost every other place than in their own homes. He believes that the reason for this unnatural tendency is to be sought in the fact that the young cannot think, but can only feel, especially as the world to-day is changing so very rapidly as to make it difficult for all to adapt themselves to the new environment.

A very important factor that is responsible for this deplorable state of things is the cinema. Although this form of entertainment has not spread to a large extent in our country as in Europe and America, we are afraid that it is doing much mischief already, especially among

the young. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the undue and thrilling excitement to the nerves caused by such scenes as are generally thrown on the screen. As the writer has aptly described—"Each thrill, as it travels on our delicate nerves, is like an overload of current on an electric wire. Load a wire too heavily, and it melts, perhaps setting fire to the house. Load nerves too heavily with thrills, and they burn out. We were never intended to live on thrills—and we cannot do it. We can only die on them if we keep them up long enough. A good many of the young people of to-day are preparing early graves for themselves."

Just as plain, healthy food becomes insipid to a person fed on rich and savoury dishes, so the home and ordinary duties of life fall flat on the young, and they become restless and discontented, coming from an artificial atmosphere of shows and excitements. But as the young of to-day become the grown up men of to-morrow, with increased duties and responsibilities of life, a good many find it difficult to adapt themselves to their new surroundings. They rely more and more upon the outside world for peace and contentment. Instead of relying upon their own resources, they become more and more dependent upon others for their happiness. Another evil consequence pointed out by the writer is that owing to the artificial and exciting life in which the modern youths have been brought up, they have not learnt to think for themselves but have depended upon the 'movie' to do their thinking for them. Consequently they have no definite purpose in life and drift away aimlessly.

The evil does not end here. The cinemas, not unfrequently, show such pictures as had better not been shown to the young. From these they get acquainted with the dark and seamy side of life, and their sexual instinct gets prematurely excited. We do not believe that the cinemas must necessarily be of the kind that has been pointed out above. For, they could easily be used for educational purposes. But so long as they are under

the control of persons with no higher motive than personal gain by any means, the evils pointed out are unavoidable.

DENMARK AND INDIA.

Of the few important countries to which students of the co-operative movement turn for inspiration and guidance, Denmark occupies a conspicuous position. To us who are engaged in the task of banishing from India indebtedness, poverty and the numerous ills attending them, it is most instructive and useful to study the history of the emergence of Denmark from a state of ignorance, conservatism, bondage and poverty into one of the most advanced, progressive and prosperous countries within the last century.

In the course of a lecture delivered by Mr. C. F. Strickland, I. C. S., Joint Registrar of the Co-operative Societies, Punjab, at the Lahore Y. M. C. A. and reproduced in the 'Young Men of India,' describing the condition of Denmark a hundred years ago, he pointed out that 'in addition to a backward agriculture, an ignorant peasantry and a dispirited nation, Denmark suffered from an unintelligent system of education, which was neither liberal nor national.' About the end of the eighteenth century, the serfs were released from bondage, and plots of land sufficient for maintenance were given them by the Government. But so long as the peasant remained ignorant and conservative in his outlook, his lot in life remained as sad as before.

One of the most powerful agencies in bringing about an amelioration in the condition of the peasantry was the Folk High Schools in Denmark, inaugurated by Grundtvig. "His first object was to create citizens, men of broad mind, men who wished to learn rather than to earn—a very important distinction both for teacher and for pupil, to learn rather than to earn. He wished to teach the peasantry of Denmark what it meant to be a citizen of a free country. He wished to fit them to be

citizens of a free country, to teach them how to live, how to live as free men and patriots, to teach what patriotism meant and what love of country meant."

The nature of a Folk High School is somewhat as follows:—It admits only adults of both sexes from the age of 18 and upwards. It is residential, usually rural, and the course of teaching is for six months only, with 'refresher courses' for one month in every successive year. The teaching is oral, and there is no examination, but the pupil learns by practice the full meaning of citizenship. It is said that about one-fourth of the population of Denmark passes through these schools. These are private schools where fees for teaching, board and lodging are levied, and it is said that even persons of the age of 40 or 50 attend these schools. Singing forms a strong element in these schools. The teaching is mostly by debates and discussions among the pupils themselves, the teacher taking very little active part except to guide whenever necessary. The subjects taught are the history of the nation, its constitution, its language and literature, the local institutions and the law as it affects the people. There is no religious teaching, but the study of man and the history of religions is undertaken from an ethical point of view. And above all the atmosphere is full of the sweetness of the relations between Guru and disciple.

It might be easily gathered from the above that what the Folk High School aims to do is to take up grown up men and women who, after their primary education, have been toiling in various trades and occupations of life, and, in the short space of six months, to equip them with practical knowledge essential to the proper discharge of the duties of citizenship.

The problem of adult education in our country is no doubt more difficult and complicated. The vast majority of the masses are illiterate, and it is also doubtful whether they could afford to go and pay for their residence and education in a school of the above kind for a period of six months. The Folk High School plan will

have to be modified to suit the peculiar conditions of this country. For nearly three months in the year, the educational institutions as well as the law courts remain closed, and the peasants are also free about this time. If a number of lawyers, teachers and college students would form into small groups and spend their vacation in selected rural areas, an interesting experiment in adult education could be tried. Almost every village in India possesses a temple, Dharamshala, or some such public place where the school could easily be held. Wherever it is not convenient for men to gather in the day, an attempt should be made to attract them in the night by magic lanterns, music etc. It would be worth while exploring the possibilities of such work in this direction.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्पिष्टत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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No. 9.

TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

29th December, 1920.

Last night from 1 o'clock till the morning the Swami suffered from a very acute nerve pain in one of the big toes. Referring to that he said, "Such pain is extremely unbearable. It may even cause death."

Luckily, by the massaging of mustard oil the pain was almost gone by the morning.

31st December.

It was the birthday of the Holy Mother, and many devotees were assembled in the Swami's room. Referring to the recent pain he had in his toe he remarked: There is no knowing why such a thing happens or why it increases or decreases. People hazard some patchwork of an explanation for them. But everything depends on the will of the Divine Mother. This I have realised that behind everything in the universe

there is a great Power at work. And She is all good. Even the worst suffering a man undergoes is due to Her will. And it is ultimately for his good, for such suffering removes countless past impressions from his mind.

Man has to his credit the actions of many previous births, which must work themselves out. Nothing particularly wrong has been committed in this life. But there are the accumulated sins of many past lives. These sufferings are due to them.

One amongst the audience remarked that it might also be a case of vicarious punishment. To this the Swami replied, "Yes, some people argue that way also. Formerly I would not much believe in theories that one suffered for the sins of another. Now I fully believe in them. One can easily increase or decrease the happiness or misery of another. And it is in proportion to the capacity of the person doing it." Somebody referred to such instances in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother. Whereupon the Swami said, "Yes. These have but strengthened my belief."

After going through the Press tribute on Mahatma Gandhi's settlement with the Bengal delegates at the Nagpur congress he observed, "Ah, I am reminded of the words of Swami Vivekananda: We agree to differ."

1st January, 1921.

The resolutions and speeches of the recent Nagpur session of the Congress were read out to him. Hearing how Mahatma Gandhi had carried the whole Congress with him he said: Such a thing is bound to happen when the inspiration comes from on High. The Lord is working through Gandhi. Who can withstand the force of his words? These wonderful things are happening through the power of Divine will.

Referring to the harmony of all religions as preached by Sri Ramakrishna, one of the monks incidentally remarked, "Ours will be the state religion in time." "Yes," said the Swami, "if you prove yourselves worthy of the task. You are the representatives of that religion—the custodians of its future. Our part is played."

The conversation turning on the Ali Brothers, the Swami said, "Mr. Saukat Ali is fully imbued with the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. India has become his religion. But the younger brother has leanings towards the Moslem community."

Somebody at this stage said, "If you live for some time longer, you are sure to see wonderful progress within the country."

Swami—"One is tempted to see such a happy state of things, for our heart is upon that. This is indeed the mission of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, who sacrificed themselves for it. I am glad to hear to-day's news."

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

"All roads lead to Rome" is a truth which has far wider application than is usually supposed. It is particularly true of the various religions of the world although the followers of some religions would not be willing to subscribe to it. So far as the Hindus are concerned there is nothing strange and startling in this view. Throughout the entire field of their holy scripture, one can come cross with numerous passages such as, "That which exists is One, sages call It variously." Not only the sages, philosophers, and pundits who have ready access to the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Gita do put their faith in such a universal and catholic view, the so-called uneducated and illiterate masses as well are equally familiar with such conceptions. Even legends and folk-tales—the mirror which truthfully reflects the mind of the people—abound in instructive stories establishing the identity of the Gods of the varying sects and religions. Even the most illiterate peasant never commits the folly of assuming that faiths other than his own are false and do not therefore deserve any respect. In various parts of India

instances of Hindus worshipping in the Christian churches and the Muslim mosques are common at the present day.

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In the other great religions, as Christianity and Islam, too, there is nothing that is narrow or objectionable in their fundamental teachings. Any one studying impartially the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, would feel the striking similarity and even identity in essentials with the teachings of the Upanishads and the Gita. We have no hesitation in believing that Jesus was to all intents and purposes a true Vedantin. The lives of numerous Christian saints and mystics too prominently bring out the fact that a truly religious man cannot go against the basic principles of any religion. If we turn to Islam, what do we find but the conception of a great All-merciful Supreme Ruler and all-embracing brotherhood of humanity? Also it is well-known that an important phase in the development of Islamic faith, namely, Sufism, is hardly distinguishable from the Vedanta.

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In spite of this essential and fundamental unity of these great religions, in the past as well as in the present, the adherents of the various religions have been constantly quarrelling and at war with one another. One of the most perplexing, but withal true, phenomena in the world, is that while religion on the one hand has brought to humanity more blessings, more peace and love than any other force, on the other hand it has brought fierce hatred and bitter enmity between man and man and on several occasions has deluged the world with human blood. Nevertheless we cannot help looking up to religion as one of the most vitalising and ennobling of all forces that work for progress and salvation of the human race. This faith does not blind us to the fact that there are serious difficulties on the way to be overcome before the life-giving power of religion can come into full play. The first and most obvious of these is the claim of all the religions that

each has got the whole truth and none else ; that God has revealed Himself truly only to their prophets ; that their own scriptures are the only inspired ones. The claim of each of these religions as the only possible universal religion has been not a little responsible for the division of humanity into conflicting and irreconcilable groups, and has brought the world to the present chaotic condition. These considerations do not make us lose heart, and our firm faith is that a universal religion alone can bring about universal brotherhood. We shall not here enter into the intricate and comprehensive question of the ways and means of realising a truly helpful, universal religion, but confine our attention to what should be the proper attitude towards preaching, conversion, Suddhi, and sangathan and similar questions that have come into special prominence in recent times.

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Even when one is not prepared to concede the superiority of any particular religion over all the rest, nor that any particular creed alone has the monopoly of the whole truth, one cannot question even for a moment the perfect legitimacy of the claim of each religion to publish, preach and propagate its peculiar faith. No responsible follower of any religion could conscientiously lend his approval to any form of abuse or vilification of the rival faiths, but in actual practice, consciously or unconsciously, openly or covertly in a more or less degree, the ordinary run of preachers in trying to prove the superiority and all-satisfying nature of their respective religions rarely escape the temptation to deprecate their rival faiths. The evil does not stop here. The followers of Christianity and Islam have a wide-spread organisation for carrying on propaganda with a view to increase the nominal adherents of their respective faiths. Instances are not wanting where *all possible means* are employed to win new adherents. The use of social and political influence and other forms of material temptation in effecting baptism ought to be deemed more reprehensible than the

employment in war of poisonous gas or bombing the whole population from aeroplanes. Not only all the lives and examples of the prophets of religion shine before the world as an emphatic protest against the mixing up of every form of base material considerations for changing one's native faith, but their noble and enlightened representatives also have repudiated the adoption of means and methods savouring of dishonesty and secrecy.

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It is well-known that many cultured Indians feel the greatest respect for the personality of Jesus Christ and regard with utmost sympathy and approval the numerous philanthropic, educational, and other beneficent activities of the Christian missionaries in this country. Yet most of these are honestly and sincerely convinced that the method of proselytism employed by the Christian missions is opposed to the spirit and teaching of Christ and results in more harm than good. No Christian missionary would, we are sure, question the transparent sincerity of Mahatma Gandhi, and yet these are his views regarding the proselytising activity of all missionary religions: "Proselytising has done some good, but it has perhaps been out-weighed by the evil it has left behind. Whether you profess one religion or another is of no consequence whatsoever. What God will say, and wants us to say, is not what we profess with our lips but what we believe in our hearts; and there is no shadow of doubt that there are thousands and thousands of men and women in the world who do not know the Bible or the name of Jesus or of His amazing sacrifice, but who are far more God-fearing than many a Christian who knows the Bible, offers his prayers regularly and believes sincerely that he follows all the Ten Commandments. Religion is made of sterner stuff, and it is impossible for us frail, weak human beings to understand what people mean when they say that they would be better if they professed something else from what they did."

The contribution of Islam to the thought and culture of humanity is very great and valuable. At a time when the majority of people were disputing and fighting about unintelligible creeds and ceremonies, Islamic Faith was a veritable God-sent boon. It brought a remarkable simplicity of faith and simplicity of living in its message of, "One God, One Brotherhood, One Faith." In the light of this most beautiful and true philosophy which clearly repudiates all barriers of formal creeds, we are unable to accept as true of the highest traditions of Islamic faith, the division of humanity into Muslims and non-Muslims. Still less could any justification be found for the belief current amongst most Muslims, that *only Muslims* are of one brotherhood and that it is their sacred duty to convert the unbelievers by the force of the sword. It will be instructive to consider a little more closely the assertions of Islam, "Allahu Akbar," God is greater and of the Universal Kingdom or Brotherhood. God is greater than anything that man can imagine ; He is the One God of all mankind, of all creation, and His Standard, His Judgment, and His Mercy, are alike for all, Muslims, Hindus, Christians. The Holy Quran distinctly teaches us that it is false religion to put a limit to His Power and Mercy, and assert that only those who believe in this or that formula of faith can get salvation &c.; such lies are the invention of self-seeking priests to perpetuate their hold through fear and superstition on ordinary people's minds. The Holy Quran says:—"Verily those who believe and those who follow the Jew's religious rule and Christians and Sabeans—whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and *does good works*—surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they suffer grief."

And again:—

"And they say: None enters Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian ; . . . Bring your proof (of that which you assert) if you are truthful.

"Nay, but whosoever turns his face towards God, *while doing good* (to men), surely his reward is with his

Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them, neither shall they suffer grief."

In their dealing with non-Muslim communities, notably in cases of conversions, the guiding motive seems to be 'all is fair in love and war'. To Take up an aggressive attitude towards other communities, is according to their own Holy Prophet's words to cease to be a true Muslim, for it is said, "He is not of us who sides with his tribe in aggression. If the Muslims are to make their daily conduct and life square with the highest traditions of their Holy Prophet, they must accept Allah's Universal Kingship and the fact of universal brotherhood without any limitation or reservation.



Such considerations as have been advanced above bring out one fact prominently before us. That none of the great religions is fundamentally antagonistic to the others. The more one tries to realise in life the best teachings of one's own religion, the less does one care for such matters as outward name and form, symbols and ceremonies, yet all the world over, people attach more importance to these non-essentials. This is the root of all trouble and quarrel over religions. In India at the present day perhaps owing to the obsession of communal feelings in political and other public questions, we meet with a rivalry or a state of war among different religions as to the number of professed adherents each can boast of. Regarding the ways and means that are employed in the conversions which are usually reported in the newspapers, the less said the better. To us it appears that in most cases the performance is a denial of God and perversion of the highest ideals of all true religions. The Suddhi, the Sangathan, the Tanzim, and Tablig, and similar movements have no doubt their proper and legitimate place and purpose. Each community, in so far as it does not interfere with the national progress and aspirations, nor with the legitimate rights and privileges of other communities, should be allowed to organise itself

for advancing the interests of the individual members as well as the community as a whole. But under the peculiar conditions in which our country finds itself to-day, the emphasising, in season and out, of communal claims and interests works as a serious impediment in the way of India fulfilling her mission in the world.

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The Suddhi, the Sangathan, the Tanzim, and Tablig movements which have in recent times come into prominence would appear to be more mixed up with social and political considerations than with motives purely religious. In spite of the fact that some of the originators and supporters of these movements invariably assert that the motives behind these are exclusively religious, we cannot help the observation that in the minds of the ordinary people at least communal considerations provide the zest and sustaining power. The history of the relations of the various communities in recent years bears ample evidence to this view. Our policy precludes the taking of sides in current controversial questions. On principle we hold that it is the duty of the state to hold the scales even in all communal matters. Recently we have come across an instance in which consciously or unconsciously the government appears to have ignored the wisdom of such a policy. In the Punjab Administration Report for the year 1923-24 the Suddhi movement is defined as one to convert Mohamedans to Hinduism, (i.e., make them Suddha or "pure") and that 'a Sangathan is a committee formed for this object and to take other action against Mohomedans.' That these definitions are far from the truth, is not the only objection. Under the peculiar circumstances in which public life in the Punjab is vitiated by communal squabbles, riots &c., such partial and prejudiced views can only have the effect of inflaming the masses of Mohamedans against the Hindus. The Suddhi movement has undoubtedly proselytising as its aim, but it seeks more to reclaim those who abandoned the folds of Hinduism to join other religions and are

anxious to revert to their original faith. So far as we are aware many converts to Christianity have undergone Suddhi and have re-entered Hinduism. The conversion of people born and brought up in other religions has been very rare. In the light of these facts to characterise Suddhi as if its whole aim was to make inroads into Mohamedanism is nothing short of a huge blunder likely to produce unfortunate consequences. The definition of Sangathan also is not a whit more correct or happy. The word Sangathan means consolidating and aims at the union of diverse creeds and classes which go under the name of Hinduism. It further aims to purge Hindu Society of its innumerable caste disabilities, inequalities, and other evils. It is purely a movement to promote internal peace, good-will, and co-operation among the different sects and classes that make up the Hindus.

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The proselytising activities of the Hindu and Muslim communities in India have in recent times not only led to disturbances and riots in many places, but also acted as a serious menace to national unity. This tendency is now in its full swing and shows no signs of abatement in the near future. Under the circumstances some responsible leaders feel the necessity for a law for the control and registration of conversions so that the tension between the two communities might be lessened. The Kotah state has taken the cue and enacted a law which prohibits the conversion from one religion to another of males under 18 and of females under 20, and requires all converts to declare before a magistrate that the change of faith is due to conviction and not to temptation or intimidation. It also provides that orphans should be brought up by their co-religionists or handed over to the state orphanage. The experiment is no doubt worth watching. Although we cannot approve on principle of any state interference in purely religious matters, such remedies might be sought as a temporary expedient.

Approaching this matter from a purely religious point of view we do not see much necessity for a formal conversion. If the missionary of any religion could by his example and character make others turn away from all forms of evil and untruth and ennoble their character, what need is there to make them accept his own religion in name and form as well? The history of the world proves that holiness, love, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possession of any particular creed or faith and that men of the most exalted characters have been born in every religion. If a man lives up to the highest ideals of any religion it does not matter whether he nominally belongs to religion or none at all. But if on the other hand he merely professes with his lips and mechanically observes the formulæ and ceremonies but does not imbibe the spirit, the best religion does him no good. We do not wish the Christian to become a Hindu or Muslim and *vice versa*, but only that each should live up to the highest ideals of his own faith, and at the same time while preserving his individuality and growing according to his own law of growth, try to assimilate the spirit of other religions as well.

THE PROGRESS OF HUMANITY.

It is a problem whether man finds greater pleasure in framing laws or in breaking them. The impetuosity of his nature makes him restive at the least show of any bondage, and he grows violent to cut through it, irrespective of all consequences. He can never tolerate any rule and is always on the look-out either to go beyond or escape it. This principle holds good in the physical, moral or spiritual world equally. When a man fails to grow too big or too strong for any laws, and withal the desire to be so is present in him, he will seek to avert their clutches by taking even to foul means and when that is also impossible, he will unwittingly shoulder the conse-

quences of breaking the laws. A robber knows full well what the punishment for his crime will be, but the greed for money is too strong for him and he is determined on plundering.

Nature is a relentless task-mistress. We can neither deceive her, nor break her laws with impunity. So the history of man since the days of Adam has been the history of countless breaches of laws and the sufferings brought on by them. As soon as we violate any physical law or a rule of hygiene, we get disease as a warning. Still can we avoid doing that? This is as true in the moral or spiritual world as in the physical world. Nature's laws are uniform throughout.

The spendthrift who does not prepare his budget at the outset, whose debit is constantly in excess of his credit, will soon come to a stage when he will not have the courage to look into the accounts. He will take shelter in a blissful ignorance of the true state of things, which he will never like to disturb. Exactly that is the world's position to-day. By constantly transgressing the laws of our higher nature, we have come to such a state when we dare not look facts in the face, to see whether we have degraded or improved, and to what extent. On the contrary, we seek to find rest in the very speed of our downfall.

The most unwelcome question which is pressing the world to-day for an answer is, whether its condition is in any way better than what it was some thousands of years back—whether man is any better than what he was in his savage state. Up will rise the modernist at this, the very idea of comparison being preposterous in his opinion. Is the theory of evolution then a myth? Has the struggle of man for these long years to improve his lot been altogether in vain? Why, many are dreaming the approach of the millennium, when the earth will be another Paradise and man will enjoy here, in this very life, perfect bliss and happiness!

Truly, as a result of human endeavour since the very dawn of existence, art, literature, science and philosophy have been developed and cultivated to an amazing degree.

Forced by human intelligence nature is daily giving out her secrets to minister to the comforts of man, and the impossible of yesterday is becoming the possible of to-day. Yet it is doubtful whether man is a better being now than what he was before. What a huge contrast between a man of the palæolithic age—not knowing how to pasture, cultivate or manufacture ; depending for food on raw fruits, fish and meat ; using stones and sticks as substitute for instruments ; and in a state of constant and keen struggle to protect himself against the ravages of nature—and the man of to-day enjoying the heavenly luxuries of life, daily harnessing the forces of nature to his comfort, pleasure and fancy ! But with all his fancied progress and boast of civilisation can he say that the savage in him is not hidden under the cover of refinement ? True, the so-called culture has sharpened his sensibilities and made him more polished in his habits and manners, but under the skin-deep cover of the modern man, there lurk the same old savage instincts, throttling the higher traits of his nature. Who will deny the truth of this, if he but thinks of the terrible bloodshed that has deluged the earth from time to time in the name of civilisation and progress ? If in the savage state man at times identified himself with the brute, now that is being done on a wider and more organised scale : the whole human race is now in a state of constant warfare ; and the sad spectacle of might being right is witnessed everywhere.

The episode of Alexander and the Thracian Chief is now daily repeated in the pages of history. What is considered abominable in individual life is lauded to the sky when done on a large scale by a whole nation. What a great havoc has been done to the world in the name of country, of nationality and of patriotism ! A good man leading an ideal life when left alone, is induced to commit the worst form of savagery under the intoxication of patriotism. We are so apt to forget that society lives for man and not man for society. It is society which should pay homage to man and not *vice versa*. Society should be regulated in a way conducive to the growth of man.

and not conversely. But every day we live a life of contradictions. The very society or state which punishes an individual for a particular crime, encourages, nay, compels him to do that, when its own self-interest is at stake. Since a man is a part of society, it is but natural that the vices of society should be reflected in his individual life. If treachery goes by the name of wisdom when done for a political purpose if millions of lives count as a trifle when the greed of a nation is rampant, why should not a man be induced to follow the same course in his individual life? When a nation wants to serve a particular purpose fair or foul, it is openly ready to drop at any moment all pretensions to moral culture, and we find in consequence "the modern version of the naked war-dance of the savage." The relationship between nations to-day is established not upon the comradeship of human hearts, but upon the treacherously shifting base of mutual distrust and suspicion. The history of the world in any particular age is the history of the fight of one nation against another for its own aggrandisement. We find a repetition of the same 'struggle for existence' in man's private life also. And what does this 'struggle for existence' mean after all? It means that a man may pounce upon his fellow-being at any time with impunity, if only he can evade the eye of law. So we find under the ægis of modern civilisation we have been converted into "political units" or "commercial beings," but the human heart in us is languishing—"the man" in us is pining.

The feeble protest that came from time to time against this in the name of religion proved futile. So religion has now to bow to the caprice of nations, and to many it has simply been a convenient tool for the furtherance of their selfish ends. The Bible is said to be in many cases 'the precursor of the merchant and the gunboat': it simply paves the way for commercial and political exploitation. The teachings of Christ are repeated in the sanctuary, but hardly followed in the life abroad. Under the laws of the present day world, God has been ousted by Mammon, and "prophets have become an anachronism." When

necessary, religion itself is exploited for political purposes. An eminent writer grieves over the fact that in the last war, "in the name of the King of Peace, people were called upon to take up arms. The church invoked His name to support in turn the cause of each contending country and from the pulpit men were exhorted to kill one another." And even priests were forced to fight.

But truth is a highly corrosive substance, which will make its way even through walls of adamant. It will prevail in the end. There is a moral law in the universe which we can never safely defy. If you touch the fire, you are sure to burn your fingers. Setting aside all considerations about future life, in this very life we cannot pull on long by stifling our higher nature. By persisting in this way either we bring misery on ourselves, or, if we be too thick-skinned to feel it, we bring misery on society. So we find that the abject greed and war-intoxication of nations have brought the world to a state where it is well-nigh impossible to establish peace again. The best brains in all countries are at a loss to find out a solution as to how order can be evolved out of the present chaotic state of the world. Laws are being framed which, if followed, may hold in check the rapacity of the nations, but when the bond between nations is so unstable, the laws may be thrown to the winds at any time, and the furies of war let loose. We forget that nations like individuals cannot be made better by the government of rules, unless there is a permanent change in their habitual outlook of life. Rules are the creation of human beings, and unless they are met half-way by the willing acceptance of those for whom they are made, what usefulness will they serve? So our hope in the League of Nations or any other organisation of the type rests on very flimsy foundations. Rightly did the "poet of the defeated nation" warn a rising nation, puffed up with rapid success in life—"We have seen that with its vaunted love of humanity, it (the modern civilisation) has proved the greatest menace to man, far worse than the sudden outbursts of nomadic barbarism

from which men suffered in the early ages of history. We have seen that, in spite of its boasted love of freedom, it has produced worse forms of slavery than ever were current in earlier societies—slavery whose chains are unbreakable, either because they are unseen, or because they assume the names and appearance of freedom. We have seen under the spell of its gigantic sordidness, man losing faith in all the heroic ideals of life, which made him great. Therefore you cannot with a light heart accept the modern civilisation with all its tendencies, methods and structures."

Now what should we do as a remedy? Should we discard the civilisation altogether and go back to nature, as the saying goes? That is as impossible as to wish that a river should go back to its course, because it brings muddy water. Youth strays far away from the innocence of childhood, but it will ever remain a fond dream for a youth to go back to the days of childhood to regain that lost innocence. Youth has got its own advantages, as childhood has. One cannot be a substitute for the other. However rosy may be the vision of the idyllic life of the primitive man to us living at a distant time, we cannot go back to that stage any more, and who knows if we shall see the thing in the same light, should we get that condition at all? Though the modern civilisation has miserably failed to develop the human elements in our life, it is not altogether without advantages in its own way. Let us avail ourselves of these and rebuild the fabric of human life on them—much stronger, much surer and much more comprehensive. That is what good sense dictates. "There can be no doubt whatsoever," writes a great German thinker, "that man as the Lord of Nature is a greater being than man as Nature's subject. And then culture in the . . . sense of 'life-form as immediate expression of a spirit' which has become impossible to-day will become possible once again, and in a more all-embracing and more encompassing sense than ever before. Then spirit will have become to express itself through the medium of technically conquered nature, as originally as it did in the days of old Greek or Chinese culture."

The whole problem lies there. Nowadays we are so busy with externals that our spirit cannot find expression—that the Divinity in us cannot manifest itself. We have forgotten the saying of Christ, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" We are out to conquer the whole world, the whole of external nature, but we take no notice of the fact that, all the same, we are losing our soul. If we can remedy that, modern civilisation will not be a set-back to the growth of our life, but will stand to our advantage. The great Swami Vivekananda used to say, "The progress and civilisation of the human race simply mean controlling the nature—internal and external." The criterion of a civilisation according to him is how far it helps to awaken the Divine in us by controlling the inner nature. As we are too busy to control the external nature, and ignore the inner one altogether, the world stands in chaos. For the external world is but the gross manifestation of the internal world. The man who has got control over the internal forces will get the whole of nature under his control.

At the dawn of civilisation, the Indo-Aryan tribes coming to a place, where life was comparatively easy, the struggle for existence less keen, where climate, environment and everything tended to the development of a contemplative mood, searched out the laws and workings of mind and inward life, and solved the problems of human life in a way that all weary souls might find rest under it. They were not wholly filled with other-worldliness, as the moderners are afraid. They too developed art, science, philosophy, literature and many other branches of learning to a degree which is the despair of the modern age. But all their activities centred round one point—namely, the solution of the riddle of human life. Though there were wars and feuds even in that age, at any time there could be found men who stood face to face with Truth, towering above all earthliness, and offering the balm of peace, when warring nations were lacerated and weary of life. The Western nations from the very beginning had to live a life of constant fight with external

nature, and so they have developed a civilisation which has made her a willing slave to them. But as matter is not everything, they have come to a stage which threatens the existence of the whole world. The real remedy, therefore, lies in the combination of these two forms of civilisation. Posterity will gratefully cherish the memory of those who are trying to bring about this union of the East and the West.

But unfortunately, to-day, the West is too proud of its triumph to bow low to learn anything from others ; and the East lies trampled and humiliated, dazzled by the power of others' wealth, and forgetful of its own strength. But light will come from the East, as it has always done in the past. The poet saw with his unerring vision :

"The crimson glow of light on the horizon is not the light of thy dawn of peace, my Motherland.

"It is the glimmer of the funeral pyre burning to ashes the vast flesh,—the self-love of the Nation—dead under its own excess.

"Thy morning waits behind the patient dark of the East,
"Meek and silent.

"Keep watch, India.

"Bring your offerings of worship for that sacred sunrise.

"Let the first hymn of its welcome sound in your voice and sing.

"Come, Peace, thou daughter of God's own great suffering."

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA.

MEENNATH AND GORAKNATH.

OR

DEVOTION OF A DISCIPLE TOWARD HIS GURU.

The gods, or devas, as painted in Hindu mythology are often a curious mixture of human and divine. And this will not appear strange if only we remember that these gods are men who have earned their respective exalted positions by meritorious deeds performed on earth. After enjoying the amount of reward they are entitled to they are born on earth again.

Some gods can roam from sphere to sphere, in heaven and on earth, and can assume different forms ; others possess superhuman powers, and can pronounce on man the most terrible curses, and bestow on him the most coveted boons. Some are of a jealous disposition and fear that a great Yogi, or very holy person, may come and usurp their enviable position in heaven.

So of Siva—not the Great God, Mahadeva, but the god of mythology—we are told that he with his consort Parvati resided in a beautiful forest-retreat at Kailash, a sacred mountain in the higher and more remote regions of the Himalayas. There amidst lovely scenery, surrounded by flowering shrubs under magnificent deodar trees, with only the wild animals as their companions, they passed their days in great happiness.

Siva was all-powerful and all-knowing, and it was even he who had created our mortal world. Parvati, his worthy spouse, rich in learning and wisdom found her greatest pleasure in waiting on her lord, and seated at his feet to listen to his divine instructions,—such instructions as only Siva could impart. She never tired attending his discourses on higher truths.

Once when Siva after long hours of deep meditation at last opened his lotus eyes, Parvati approaching in great

humility with folded palms, begged him to impart to her that knowledge which frees the soul from all bondage.

Siva, delighted at this request, smilingly said, "That which you have asked for is Sacred Wisdom ; it is called Vedanta, the supreme knowledge. It is a great secret unknown even to the other gods. It must by no means be divulged to any human being, for, surely, if any one hears it he will proclaim it broadcast ; all mankind will then strive for liberation ; the balance of society will be disturbed, and the world will come to an end. Let us therefore in our subtle bodies go to a place where no one can see or hear us. Here, in our retreat we are not safe, for wandering ascetics may be about and they might overhear us."

So Siva, and Parvati went in search of a suitable place. They came to the middle of a broad river. "Here we are safe," Siva said, and seated in the Akasha he began his divine instructions.

But it so happened that at that very spot a great Yogi, Meennath by name, was practising austerities hidden under the water. Through long, persevering practice of Pranayama and concentration of mind he had attained mastery over the elements, and it was his ambition to become as powerful as the devas. Now, from beneath the water he heard everything Siva said, and he realised that to become a mighty god was after all not the highest attainment ; that the knowledge of Brahman alone could secure liberation and eternal bliss. He came to the surface, saluted Siva and Parvati and entered into the forest.

Siva seeing Meennath became greatly alarmed. "The secret is out !" he exclaimed. "My creation will come to an end ! This Yogi will undo all my work by teaching man the path to freedom !" But Parvati knew better. "My lord," she said, "fear not. I am a woman, I know the hearts of men and all their weaknesses. Leave everything to me."

Meennath had entered the forest and in a secluded spot gathering branches and leaves constructed for him-

self a little hut under the spreading branches of a fatherly, old mango tree. There, on the bank of a meandering stream he began to practise higher forms of meditation, and with his mind steadily fixed on the Supreme made great spiritual progress. Men and women from adjacent villages passing through the woods would bring him little offerings of food, and converse with him. They called him saintly Meennath.

In course of time two sweet-tempered youths became his disciples. They tended the sacred fire and gathered fruits and eatable plants which they cooked for their Guru and themselves. Meennath instructed them in the practices of Vedanta. Thus they also grew in wisdom and sanctity.

Parvati, unobserved, watched the little group. Then she realised that the time had come to put a stop to their spiritual progress. Assuming the form of a beautiful woman she approached the hermitage and begged to be allowed to serve the Yogis. Meennath offered some objections but at last consented thinking her to be a pious woman desirous of adopting a holy life.

All went well for some time. Then one of the disciples charmed by the beauty and sweet disposition of the woman fell in love with her. Leaving his Guru and fellow-disciple he fled with her from the hermitage, and married her.

Parvati was well satisfied. But how to get hold of the other Yogis? To accomplish this, after some time when the incident had almost been forgotten, she came to the hermitage again, but this time in the form of a charming queen, highly cultured and well read in sacred lore. With great humility bending her head to touch the feet of the holy men she implored to be taught the truths of Vedanta. Meennath spoke to her a few words of edification, and the queen departed leaving behind a little milk and sweetmeats and luscious fruits as an offering to the hermits. This she repeated day after day always asking for new instructions, sometimes dropping a

remark showing her exceptional intelligence and appreciation of the noble Truth.

Meennath gradually began to look forward with pleasure to these daily visits, for never before had he met with such a charming personality and keen intellect. The conversations became more and more intimate. In the queen Meennath recognised a kindred spirit who understood and appreciated him. In fact he became infatuated with her. Gradually his mind became clouded with the desire to be with her always ; he lost his keen power of discrimination and self-control, and one night while his disciple, Goraknath, was asleep he stole away from the hermitage, and went to the hut nearby where the queen was putting up. The queen feigned great surprise at this nightly visit. But soon they came to an understanding. They decided together to go to the queen's palace.

This, however, was not an easy matter, for no man had ever been allowed to enter the queen's capital. But disguised as a woman Meennath safely reached the palace where he was kept in hiding by the queen. Only the queen's first maid was taken into the secret.

Goraknath in the morning not finding his master, at once understood what had happened. And he was confirmed in his belief when coming to the queen's hut he found it vacated. For many days with anxious heart he had suspected the queen's real motive and had watched the growing intimacy between Meennath and his seducer. Now his fears had come true. His beloved master had fled away inveigled by the charms of a wily woman. Meennath, his spiritual preceptor, his guide, his friend, more dear to him than a father—had stealthily fled away !

With a sad heart, rebuking himself for not having warned his master, Goraknath tried to follow his accustomed routine of devotions. But the thought that his Guru had been thus entrapped and led into the path of unrighteousness left him no peace. My Guru is my God, he thought, through his instructions my spiritual eye has been opened and my mind cleared of the illusion of

ignorance ; he, verily, is my soul, my Lord, my all in all. I cannot forsake him. Even though he has strayed from the path he is my beloved preceptor. I must find him. Surely, his love for me will bring him back if only I can speak to him. So he decided to go in search of his master and resolved not to return to his peaceful retreat without him.

After a long and tedious search of many days he discovered the whereabouts of Meennath and the queen. But being a man he was not allowed to enter the capital.

What could be done? Enter he must! Then, for the first time he made use of his yogi-powers. He knew that by doing so he was in danger of putting a stop to his spiritual progress, for so the scriptures taught. But for his Guru he was ready to sacrifice everything, his body and his soul. So concentrating all his energy he changed himself into a woman. It was now easy to enter the city.

Goraknath had an extraordinarily beautiful voice. This soon became the talk of the town, and the queen hearing about it sent order to the stranger woman to sing before her at the palace. Goraknath obeyed, and the queen and Meennath, who was concealed where he could hear the songs, were delighted with the performance. This led to a daily engagement.

Meennath from his hiding-place was greatly astonished to hear a voice so similar to the voice of Goraknath, his disciple. Furthermore, the songs were the same Goraknath used to sing in the hermitage after his evening devotions when darkness enveloped the forest and all other sounds were hushed in silence. These were the songs that used to stir his very being, songs burning with renunciation and love for God. It was strange, indeed! His curiosity aroused, one day when the queen was absent, stepping from his place of concealment he asked the sweet singer where she had learned these songs.

Goraknath at the sight of his fallen Guru, overcome by emotions, tears bursting from his eyes, clasped his master's feet. With difficulty, his voice choked, he stammered, "My master, my Lord, at last I have found

you. Why did you leave me? Was it to teach me a lesson? How happily we used to live together in the solitude of our little retreat hid in the forest. On the bank of the holy river you used to teach me the path of Truth. There you allowed me to serve you. Have you forgotten those days? Oh, how powerful is Maya!"

Meennath was puzzled. What did it mean? Who was this strange woman? Was it possible that his beloved disciple was at his feet, his disciple whom he had forsaken? He stared in bewilderment. Am I dreaming? he thought. His head began to reel, he sank to the ground and everything began to vanish.

When he came to his senses again he saw Goraknath bending over him, fanning his perplexed brain. He rubbed his eyes. Then, everything became clear. In a flash he realised how low he had fallen. "My son!" he cried. "My son! Is it you? Oh, save me! You, indeed, are my Guru. I am your disciple! Unworthy though I am, you have not forsaken me! Rescue me from the chains of Maya!"

Tenderly, Goraknath helped his master to his feet. The two embraced and in that embrace swore eternal faithfulness.

Then, together, they made their escape, and returning to the solitude of their peaceful hermitage, gave their hearts entirely to God. Day and night they spent in worship and meditation. Goraknath again served his master in humility of spirit. And Meennath poured on him his love and blessings. Both became illumined sages. Many disciples gradually gathered around them. And thus originated the Order of Nath Sadhus who to this day, remembering this story, consider devotion to the Guru as one of their main spiritual practices.

On the likeness of the Guru we meditate.

At the feet of the Guru we bow down.

The Guru's words are Truth revealed.

To the Guru we offer worship.

SWAMI ATULANANDA.

SPIRITUAL UNFOLDMENT.

It is as clear as broad daylight that people, generally speaking, do not care about religion nowadays. They run after worldly enjoyments and are satisfied with the evanescent objects of phenomena. God and spirituality have been banished to the scrap-heap. They are meaningless to the generality of mankind. This ephemeral world of two day's duration has cut a permanent niche in our mind. But thanks to the innate divinity of human nature—which, though tarnished now and then by the accumulation of ignorance, cannot altogether be lost—we at times feel a sort of introspective mood and realise the benign and serene influence of the Spirit. Though its influence is momentary, yet it leaves an indelible impress upon our mind which only awaits more favourable circumstances to develop our potential divinity. This spiritual unfoldment of the soul is also attended with various interesting phenomena which help or retard our progress in a varying degree. It has been often found that the beginners in religious life are often puzzled with the problem of finding a short cut to God-realisation. They become impatient for the result, though this eagerness itself, if sincerely continued, ultimately helps them to realise Truth. But in not a few cases this eagerness to find out the easiest path of realisation makes their confusion worse confounded. Some think that God can be easily realised by some practices of Raja-yoga, such as Asana, Pranayama etc. Thus we find the aspirants often asking a religious teacher about the process of Hatha-yoga. These aspirants often think that these processes are indispensable. The reason of such mistaken belief is, perhaps, that the practices of Hatha-yoga yield some immediate results which are known as *siddhis* or psychic powers. They consider them as great achievements and thus often create a deadlock in the path of spiritual progress by refusing to proceed further. Again

the practices of Hatha-yoga are extremely difficult in this age. The slightest departure from the prescribed rules often bring about derangement of brain or some physical malady. Besides, a Hatha-yogi must live constantly with his Guru who must be an adept in this science. And the result which is achieved after an up-hill effort can be got by some other easier and simpler means.

Another class of spiritual aspirants wants to reach God through the complex maze of the scriptures. To them tall talks, hair-splitting arguments, ratiocinations of logic etc., are indications of spiritual progress. They pore over books day and night or indulge in vain discussion till their brain becomes dizzy and after all these intellectual gymnastics they seldom enjoy the serenity of mind which one experiences from the realisation of Truth.

There are infinite paths leading to God. They are meant for diverse temperaments. There is no harm in choosing a particular path if that helps the inflorescence of a particular soul. But the one great factor for spiritual progress is unflinching sincerity of mind. Mind should try to think constantly about God like an uninterrupted flow of oil when poured from one can to another. Though it may have to suffer from occasional defeats or disappointments, it must not give way under any circumstances. Without patience and perseverance, realisation of God is but a dream. Zeal and earnestness are the essential requisites. The aspirant should be able to cry as is found in the Bible—'The zeal for the Lord has eaten me up.' This intense thirst after God enables the devotee to find out the right path even in the midst of groping darkness; tenacity and constant practice make it possible for him to scale even the mountain-high difficulties.

Really there is no short-cut for God-realisation. The mind must be anyhow disentangled from the snares of the world, in which it has been enmeshed. So renunciation is the whole thing of religion. It is the first step of spiritual life as well as the consummation. The world and God can never be reconciled. One must give up

the one for the sake of the other. The real psychology of the aspirants who want to find out the easiest way to Truth through Hatha-yoga is that they want to enjoy the world and God together. Nothing can be more absurd than this. One whose mind is firmly set on God never casts a lingering look upon the things of the world, however tempting they may look. The stifling of desires for worldly enjoyments is the beginning of religion. Occasional successes and defeats mark the flow and ebbs of sadhana life. The goal is reached when the renunciation is complete. Truth flashes, the moment the mind is free from all desires. One who has totally given up all desires—not only of this world but of those to come—has achieved his end and become Jivanmukta—the Liberated Soul. Renunciation denotes the mile-stones of spiritual progress. One need not run helter-skelter in search of God. The key to God-realisation is in our own hand. The more we can advance along the path of renunciation, the nearer are we to God. On our mind depends the whole thing. The more we can free it from the meshes of the world, the more do we go towards our Ideal. The practices of yoga, the study of scriptures, worship, pilgrimage, holy companionship, etc., are effective means for the realisation of God only so far as they enable the Sadhaka to check his desires for earthly objects. योगश्चिन्तननिरोधः—The aim of yoga is the stifling of the outgoing propensities of mind. This is also the *rationale* of renunciation. To practise yogic disciplines without curbing the desires for worldly objects is as impossible as the task of rolling a stone along a steep path to a high mountain peak. The essence of the Vedanta also can be summed up shortly as—ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या—The Brahman alone is real and the world is unreal. The scriptures constantly din into our ear the unreality of the world. How can the scriptures stand us in good stead if after going through them we still hug to our bosom the desire for enjoyment

There is no doubt that there exists an easy way to God-realisation if we only care to find it. As a matter of

fact, the realisation of God is the easiest and the most natural thing of our life if we only will it. For He alone is our nearest Friend, dearest Relative, unfailing Guide, the surest Light, nay,—our very Self, and our very Existence. We cannot exist without Him. We live, move and have our being in Him. So nothing can be more natural for us than the realisation of God. Though it may seem an apparent contradiction, He can be realised in the easiest possible way if we be sincere. It is said if we extend one hand towards Him, He holds forth both His hands to help us.—If we advance one step to Him, He comes a thousand steps towards us. Who can say that he has failed to realise God after seeking Him in a sincere and earnest spirit? As Sri Ramakrishna used to say, people shed jugfuls of tears for their children, money and relations, but who really wants to realise God? There is the real difficulty.

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA.

THE PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL.

Close observation reveals to us that nature involves the dualism of contradictory forces such as good and evil, light and shade and so on. These phenomena agitated the minds of ancient Aryans and are still a puzzle to many a thinker of the present age. The desire for the solution of the mystery of good and evil is manifest in the philosophical investigation of different countries. All philosophy ancient and modern has attempted to give a solution of this enigma of good and evil.

Scriptures of different religions also advance different explanations for that and though they sometimes can hardly stand the test of reason, many people are satisfied with them. In the Zoroastrian scriptures two distinct beings—one the author of all that is good and the other, of all that is evil are conceived—they are called as Ahura Mazda and Ahriman respectively. In many other scriptures such crude explanations are to be found, which,

though satisfying the minds of devotees, far from solving the problem at issue, puts fresh difficulty on the way.

There are some who hold that there is nothing as evil. Everything that we find in the universe is for good. They maintain that good is a positive reality and evil is nothing but the absence or negation of good. This is indeed a case of robust optimism and marks one extreme. The opposite theory is that of dark pessimism: According to this, evil is a positive reality and good is nothing but the absence of evil. This school of philosophy tells us that life means woes and misery, that the purpose of creation is the suffering of created beings. Neither of these explanations is adequate. They can never satisfy the head and heart; for they represent only but half-truths.

The theory that the world is created by an extra-Cosmic Being cannot also save us from the difficulty. For in that case, of necessity we are to conceive of a being who is the author of evil and over whom God has no control, though all-powerful.

That nature is a manifestation of One All-pervading Reality was realised first by the thinkers of the Vedantic school of philosophy in India. They for the first time gave a perfect and rational explanation, when they declared that good and evil exist only in our mind, acting under different conditions; and that there is a state beyond mind, the goal of our life, where the contradictory forces of good and evil cannot reach.

A little reflection shows that good and evil are but two relative terms. The existence of one depends entirely on the existence of the other; one is meaningless without the other. If there be no possibility of anything as evil, we can hardly cognise anything which may be called good.

Furthermore we find that the difference between good and evil is not of kind but of degree. The point will be clearer, if we take into consideration another pair of contradictory things, *viz.*, light and darkness. Darkness does not in the least mean a total negation of light.

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Difference between light and darkness is not of kind, but of degree. The main characteristic of light consists in revealing to our sight the objects of nature that surround us. Had darkness been a total negation of light, nature would appear to us as a vast blank sheet in the dark. But experience tells us a different tale. Even in the deep darkness of night, when all heavenly bodies are invisible and all sources of light are stopped, we cannot say everything is lost to our view—trees, buildings and houses and other comparatively big things we see, though not very distinctly. This testifies to the fact that light is not wholly absent from what we designate as darkness. Another instance of this phenomenon is what we experience when passing through big railway tunnels. The rays of the sun cannot penetrate there, but still things do not escape our view altogether. The fact is darkness in such cases represents such a low degree of light that we overlook it and consider it to be a total negation of light.

We may cite here an interesting fact of modern science in support of our assertion. The famous Weber-Fechner law states that the vibrations of ether must strike against our retina with a certain degree of force before they can produce a sensation of light. When that force falls below a certain point, there is no sensation. This phenomenon clearly shows that darkness and light are conditioned by the behaviour of the same cause, *viz.*, vibrations of ether, only differing in intensity in the two cases.

Similar is the case with good and evil. There is nothing known as absolute good or as absolute evil. They are interdependent and everything in the world involves good and evil. If a thing represents a greater amount of good and a very small amount of evil, we neglect the latter and call it good and *vice versa*.

Again we find that one and the same thing appears as good and evil under different circumstances. Fire, for instance, appears very beneficial to us, when it cooks our food or warms our body when required; but the same thing

proves just the opposite, when it burns our houses or destroys the life of a man. Thus though it appears in different phases, as mentioned above, the essential nature of fire is always the same : it remains ever unchanged.

We see further, that one and the same thing appears good and evil to different persons at one and the same time. The economic exploitation of India, for instance, by foreign powers is a stumbling block in the way of our national advancement, but to them it is a fruitful source of wealth and money. We recall with horror the incidents of the last war, which devastated many countries of Europe and made such a great havoc of men and money. But can we say the great war has been altogether without any lesson to the world? Has it not proved beyond doubt the hollowness of the vaunted civilisation of Europe? And the best thinkers of the world, as a result, are busy finding out a solution as to how civilisation can be saved and permanent peace may be brought on earth. We find therefore that we cannot possibly draw a definite line of demarcation between good and evil. Only according to the preponderance of the one or the other, we call a thing as good or evil. And in the last analysis, it is found that there is nothing as good or evil in the world if not in our own mind. It is our own mind that creates the phantoms of good and evil. Now how does the mind act? It is our Ego or the spirit of selfishness that moves the mind from behind. We look upon a thing as good or evil, when considered from the standpoint of selfish purpose. So to save ourselves from the eternal conflict of good and evil, we have to come out of the narrow circle of 'I' and 'mine'—we have to kill our 'Ego'. Unless the least touch of egoism is removed from our life, we cannot hope to go beyond the duality of good and evil. When that is complete, we get to a state beyond the reach of all earthly joys or sorrows, wherefrom we look upon everything with perfect equanimity and the problem of good and evil ceases to have any meaning for us.



## CO-OPERATION AND SOCIAL REFORM.

The advantages of a Co-operative Society, as a means of improving the economic condition of any class of people are too well-known to need any detailed reference. The wonderful transformation which the movement has effected in Denmark, Ireland, Switzerland—not to speak of various other countries of Europe and America, opens a vista of immense possibilities of material and moral progress of a country. So far as the European tradition is concerned, the assumption at the back of Co-operative Movement is, whatever be the form of co-operation followed by any society, its direct and primary concern is material gain of some kind or other. When people are poor and indebted not only are they backward in education, but their standard of morals also is usually found to be low. When Co-operative Societies are started among such people to provide cheap credit and facilities for bettering their economic condition, we might hope for a corresponding improvement on the moral side as well. Except in this indirect way, the principle of Co-operative Movement in the West so far has not been applied for purposes and ends which are directly and avowedly moral.

In Japan and India there seems to be a tendency to extend the range of objects for which the Co-operative Movement is usually applied. The Young Men's Associations which are said to be found in Japanese villages are a good instance in point. Owing, perhaps, to the rigidity of the Co-operative Act in Japan these Associations are not registered under it. Nevertheless the spirit behind them is unmistakably co-operative. These Young Men's Association "aim at such 'spiritual ends' as encouraging the members to rise early in the morning, inciting them to perform acts of benevolence towards the old or weak, and organizing them to carry out a work of public utility without direct profit to themselves." As the Co-operative Societies Act of Japan limits the nature and purposes of

a society registered under it to the promotion of the economic interests of its members in accordance with co-operative principles, societies on the model of the Young Men's Association could not be brought under its scope. In our country the Act is much more elastic and admits of more varied and general interests of the community to be brought under it. The application of Co-operative Societies for extra-economic purposes finds a striking illustration in the Anti-malarial Society of Bengal in which the members seek to improve their own health and the condition of their neighbourhood by the observance of sanitary rules and the carrying out of sanitary works. The extension of the principle of co-operation to directly moral purposes and ends is said to be more common in the Punjab. Mr. Strickland, the enthusiastic Registrar of that province, points out that a few years ago a number of arbitrary societies were formed and registered under the Act. The members of these societies bound themselves to refer all disputes arising between them to arbitrators selected from a panel and to pay a penalty assessed by the committee of the society, in the event of their failure to observe this rule. We are told that these societies were to a large extent successful in their purpose but had to be closed on legal grounds, and that amended model bye-laws free from original defects have been approved and the revival of the arbitration societies may be expected in the near future. The application of the Co-operative Societies in the sphere of education is to be found in almost all provinces. In the Punjab the number of co-operative adult schools is said to be about hundred and that of compulsory education societies more than fifty.

The most typical and interesting form of moral co-operation is the Better Living Society, which might be composed of either the residents of a single village including all castes or of a single caste over a group of villages. The object of such societies would be to fix some agreed standards of ceremonial expenditure to be observed and some improved social customs to be

followed. A limited penalty for a transgression of the rules might also be provided for. One or two such societies have been organised in the Punjab. This principle of an obligation of a moral or social character on the part of the members is by no means new in the Punjab ; for we are told numerous credit societies especially among small agriculturists have some sumptuary rules (as those referred to above) among their bye-laws, and substantial penalties have also been imposed under them.

Although the application of Co-operative Movement for sanitary, educational or moral improvement of a people would be beneficial, great care and caution should be exercised in the formation of moral societies along the lines of the Better Living Societies sketched above. Everyone is familiar with the numerous social disabilities and abuses which sap the vitality of the people. The curious fact is that while the evil is recognised on all hands, even those who suffer most under it lag behind when the time for action comes. The organisation of a healthy public opinion on such matters is the first step towards any effective reform. In this connection the experiment of organising Better Living Societies is pre-eminently worthy of the attention of all social reformers. The provinces which suffer most from the evils of Dowry system should find such an experiment sound and practical.

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## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from p. 371.)

स्वप्नोपममुं लोकमसन्तं श्रवणप्रियम् ॥

आशिषो हृदि सङ्कल्प्य त्यजन्त्यर्थान् यथा वणिक् ॥ ३१ ॥

31. Imagining in their heart a future world<sup>1</sup> which is dream-like, unreal and agreeable to the ear only, they spend their money (in sacrifices) like<sup>2</sup> a trader.

[<sup>1</sup> *World*—as a place of intense enjoyment. See verse 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Like &c.*—as a trader stakes his capital on a perilous venture and loses it.]

रजः सत्त्वतमोनिष्ठा रजःसत्त्वतमोजुषः ॥

उपासत इन्द्रमुख्यान्देवादीन् न यथैव माम् ॥ ३२ ॥

32. Attached to Rajas, Sattva and Tamas, they worship not Me,<sup>1</sup> but the gods, etc., who have Indra for their chief and are concerned with Rajas, Sattva and Tamas,—and even that not<sup>2</sup> in the right way.

[<sup>1</sup> *Me*—who am beyond the three Gunas.

<sup>2</sup> *Not &c.*—The right way of worshipping the gods would be to think of them as manifestations of the Lord.]

इष्ट्वेह देवता यन्नैर्गत्वा रंस्यामहे दिवि ॥

तस्यान्त इह भूयास्म महाशाला महाकुलाः ॥ ३३ ॥

33. (They think :) Worshipping the gods here through sacrifices we shall go to heaven and enjoy there, at the end of which<sup>1</sup> we shall (again) be born here in noble families with large mansions.

[<sup>1</sup> *Which*—period of enjoyment.]

एवं पुष्पितया वाचा व्याक्षिप्तमनसां नृणाम् ॥

मानिनाञ्चातिलुब्धानां मद्वार्तापि न रोचते ॥ ३४ ॥

34. These men, who with their minds thus upset by the flowery statements in the scriptures, are vain and exceedingly greedy, never like<sup>1</sup> even a reference to Me.

[<sup>1</sup> *Never like &c.*—and therefore are degraded.]

वेदा ब्रह्मात्मविषयास्त्रिकाण्डविषया इमे ॥

परोक्षवादा ऋषयः परोक्षं मम च प्रियम् ॥ ३५ ॥

35. The Vedas comprising three sections<sup>1</sup> (really) deal with the identity of Jiva and Brahman. But the Mantras are indirect in their import, and this indirectness I like.<sup>2</sup>

[1 *Three sections*—dealing respectively with ceremonials, the Brahman and the gods.

2 *I like*—because thus only pure souls who understand the true import give up ceremonials. If, instead, these had been openly denounced, all people who should rather pass through these lower stages would have been misled into renouncing work prematurely.]

शब्दब्रह्म सुदुर्बोधं प्राणेन्द्रियमनोमयम् ॥

अनन्तपारं गम्भीरं दुर्विगाह्यं समुद्रवत् ॥ ३६ ॥

36. The manifestation<sup>1</sup> of Brahman as the Word, which is conditioned<sup>2</sup> by the Prânas, the mind and the organs, is most subtle,<sup>3</sup> limitless, profound and unfathomable like the ocean.

[The elaborate theory of the origin of speech is introduced in Slokas 36—43 to indicate the abstruseness of the Vedas. No wonder, therefore, that even sages like Jaimini have got so confounded as to build their ritualistic philosophy out of the Vedas.

1 *Manifestation &c.*—The word Sabda-Brahma means the Vedas also as the most authoritative body of words.

2 *Conditioned &c.*—Speech has a subtle and a gross form. The former again is subdivided into three stages of varying fineness, known as Parâ, Pasyanti and Madhyamâ. The first two are those manifested in the Prânas and the mind respectively, and the third is that stage which is about to issue through the vocal organs as articulate speech, which is the gross form of speech known as Vaikhari.

3 *Subtle*—both as to nature, as described in the previous note, and as to import.]

मयोपबृंहितं भूम्ना ब्रह्मणानन्तशक्तिना ॥

भूतेषु घोषरूपेण विसेषूर्णेव लक्ष्यते ॥ ३७ ॥

37. Strengthened by Me, the Infinite Brahman, of limitless powers, it is noticed<sup>1</sup> as the subtle Om in beings, like the slender fibres in a lotus stalk.

[1 *Noticed*—by the penetrative insight of the Yogis only.]

यथोणनामिहृदयादूर्णमुद्वमते मुखात् ॥

आकाशादुघोषवान् प्राणो मनसा स्पर्शरूपिणा ॥ ३८ ॥

छन्दोमयोऽमृतमयः सहस्रपदवीं प्रभुः ॥

ओङ्काराद्व्यञ्जितस्पर्शस्वरोष्मान्तस्थभूषिताम् ॥ ३९ ॥

विचित्रभाषाविततां छन्दोमिश्रचतुरक्षरैः ॥

अनन्तपारां बृहतीं सृजत्याक्षिपति स्वयम् ॥ ४० ॥

38—40. As the spider projects its web from its heart through its mouth, so the immortal Lord Hiranyagarbha, the Cosmic Prâna, whose form is the Vedas, projects out of<sup>1</sup> the subtle Om from the space of his heart, through his mind which scans the entire alphabet, the infinite mass of words known as the Vedas. These issue in a thousand channels, are enriched with the consonants (classified<sup>2</sup> into the Sparsha, the Antastha and the Ushma group) and the vowels—all fashioned<sup>3</sup> by the subtle Om. They are expressed in diverse forms of language, by means of metres with four additional letters in each succeeding variety. And Hiranyagarbha again winds<sup>4</sup> all up.

[1 Out of &c.—first as Parâ (which is the same as the subtle Om), then as Pasyanti, and so on.

2 Classified &c.—The twenty-five letters *ka* to *ma* comprise the Sparsha group, the next four the Antastha, and the last four the Ushma. The vowels are sixteen in number.

3 Fashioned &c.—in conjunction with the different parts of the vocal system.

4 Winds &c.—at the end of a cycle, as the spider also is believed to swallow its web.]

गायत्रिष्णिगनुष्टुप् च बृहती पंक्तिरेव च ॥

त्रिष्टुब्जगत्यतिच्छन्दो ह्यत्यष्ट्यतिजगद्विराट् ॥ ४१ ॥

41. (These are some of the metres :) Gâyatri,<sup>1</sup> Ushnik, Anushtup, Brihati, Pankti, Trishtup, Jagati, Ati-jagati (which belongs to a class known as Atichchandas), Atyasti, and Ativirât.

[1 Gâyatri—has twenty-four letters. Each of the succeeding varieties has four additional letters, up to Atijagati, which thus has fifty-two letters. Then the order breaks.]

किं विधत्ते किंमाचष्टे किमनूद्य विकल्पयेत् ॥

इत्यस्या हृदयं लोके नान्यो मद्भेद कश्चन ॥ ४२ ॥

42. What the Vedas enjoin,<sup>1</sup> what they express,<sup>2</sup> and what they tentatively state<sup>3</sup> merely to refute,—the secret of this none in the world knows except Myself.

[<sup>1</sup> Enjoin—in the ritualistic section.

<sup>2</sup> Express—through the Mantras of the section dealing with the gods.

<sup>3</sup> State &c.—in the section treating of the highest knowledge.]

एतावान्सर्ववेदार्थः शब्द आख्याय मां भिदाम् ॥

मायामात्रमनूद्यान्ते प्रतिबिध्य प्रसीदति ॥ ४३ ॥

43. Me<sup>1</sup> they enjoin, and Me<sup>2</sup> express, and what is stated therein only to be refuted is also I. This is the import of the entire Vedas. With Me as their substratum<sup>3</sup> the Vedas tentatively state duality as an illusion, and refuting it at the end, are satisfied.<sup>4</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> Me &c.—as Yajna or sacrifice.

<sup>2</sup> And Me &c.—as the Antaryāmin or Internal Ruler manifested through the gods.

<sup>3</sup> Substratum &c.—Just as the sap that is in a tiny seedling runs through the whole developed tree, so the import of the Om (viz., the Supreme Lord) is also that of the entire Vedas.

<sup>4</sup> Are satisfied—finish their task.]

## RAMAKRISHNA MISSION EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Reports for 1924 of some of the Educational Institutions started by the Ramakrishna Mission are given below.

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS.

This Institution was started in the year 1905 with the object of providing a home to poor and deserving boys giving them free boarding and lodging, to educate them under the *Gurukul* system where the school and home are parts of one organic life. From a very small beginning after twenty years of hard struggle, the Home

has grown into a big institution of great usefulness. A Residential High School forms a part of the Home, for which a separate block of building was erected this year at a cost of nearly a lakh and twenty-five thousand rupees. Of the total number of 125 boarders at the end of the year, 89 were pupils of the Residential High School, 29 were college students and 7 were receiving special instruction in vocational courses.

To rouse a spirit of self-reliance and initiative amongst the boys, the internal management of the Home is entirely left with them under the supervision of teachers and the boys have to do everything, from the mess arrangements to the nursing of the sick and taking care of property—there being no servants excepting two cooks.

Vocational training class forms a part of the regular school curricula and every student has to learn at least one of the subjects taught—namely, Carpentry, Rattan work, Knitting, Tailoring, Weaving and Smithy, so that he may fall back upon an extra resource in case of difficulties in life.

Special attention is paid to the development of religious nature of the boys. There is arrangement for daily worship, individual and congregational in addition to the classes that are held for religious instruction.

The Institution is maintained mainly by subscriptions and donations from the public. The receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 30,103/2/6 and the expenditure for the maintenance of the boys and the establishment was Rs. 21,312/0/6. Rs. 19,154/8/0 was added to the Permanent Endowment Fund, raising the total to Rs. 87,556/1/3. On school account (including the building fund) a sum of Rs. 88,937/8/0 was received and Rs. 80,674/8/2 expended. The total balance at the end of the year was Rs. 74,116/12/0.

The Home is now in need of quarters for the members of the staff and a Permanent Endowment Fund of five or six lakhs to insure the work against future financial embarrassments.



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RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, 7, HALDAR LANE,  
CALCUTTA.

This institution is run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama, co-ordinating the ancient ideals of education with the modern and provides free board, lodging, fees, books and other necessary things to poor and deserving youths going up for higher education. There is provision for a small number of paying students also who intend to receive this home training. It is under the charge of an able monk of the mission and licensed by the Calcutta University as a College Students' hostel. At the end of the year, there were fourteen students in the Home. of whom eight were free, two half-free and four paying. The total receipts during the year by way of subscriptions and donations amounted to Rs. 6276/3/3 and the total disbursement was Rs. 4,606/2/6 leaving a balance of Rs. 1,670/0/9 only. This shows a very poor financial condition of the Home and in consideration of its uniqueness and a career of great usefulness it deserves active sympathy and support from all who are interested in the educational welfare of the country.

The Home is at present situated in a rented house. Its immediate need is to have a permanent residence of its own where at least one hundred students may live at a time and get facilities for earning a portion of their living by farming and profitable home-industries. The Home appeals also for a fund to maintain at least ten more free boarders.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAPITH, DEOCHAR.

One of the charges against our present system of education is that it is lop-sided and make the boys denationalised. With the sole object of remedying these defects the Vidyapith was started three years back. It makes a systematic effort for the physical, intellectual, moral, practical, æsthetic and religious training of boys simultaneously and it is interesting to go through the curriculum and the table of daily routine made for the

purpose. In addition to the secular education they receive, every attempt is made to make the boys active, self-reliant and grow with a great love for national ideals.

The Vidyapith is entirely in the charge of a monastic body—for of the ten teachers in the Vidyapith, eight are monks. So we shall watch with interest the progress made by the institution run wholly on a novel plan. Within a short time the Vidyapith has been a source of considerable attraction. In the year under review it had 46 students on the roll and many had to be refused for want of accommodation. Boys are admitted at the age of eight at the lowest and the curriculum is so framed that they may appear, if they like, at the Matriculation Examination of the Calcutta University at about the age of sixteen. Each boy has to pay a monthly fee of rupees eighteen, which covers expenses for everything including board, lodge, tuition, medical help etc. This together with monthly subscriptions and donations forms the principal source of income to the Vidyapith. During the year under review the total receipts in the general fund amounted to Rs. 8,758/8/4 of which Rs. 8,452/7/9 had to be spent. Besides this a sum of Rs. 6,796/0/0 was received in the year for building purposes. The Vidyapith is now accommodated in two rented houses and to have a building of its own it requires a sum of Rs. 15,000 in addition to what has been received. It is also in immediate need of a library, a small laboratory and other equipments, for which about Rs. 2500 will be required. We wish the institution success and hope it will receive due help and encouragement from the public.

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## NEWS AND NOTES.

### SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEE.

The death of Sir Surendranath has removed one of those mighty personalities who are rightly recognised as the makers of modern India. At a time when people knew nothing of politics, Surendranath was one of those pioneer workers who awakened the national consciousness in the country. His lifelong service to the nation, extending for a period of half a century, his wonderful energy and ceaseless activity for the cause of his motherland will serve as an inspiring example, for a long time to come, to all those who will, in future, step into the field of his work. He served the country in more than one capacity. As a result of the influx of Western civilisation, when all educated persons looked to the West for inspiration and guidance and tended to be denationalised, Surendranath as an educationist and teacher of youths infused into the mind of his pupils a feeling of love for the country and a spirit of service to the nation; as a journalist he created amongst a wider circle of people an active interest in the burning problems of India, and as an orator he showed such a wonderful eminence that any country in the world might feel proud to own him as a son. There was a time when his thundering voice reverberated from one end of the country to the other and his was a name to conjure with. But politics is a field where one always stands on a slippery ground. And though lately Sir Surendranath had not so much hold over the country as in his heyday, his case was just like a proud father who, in old age failing to keep pace with time, never grudges to be eclipsed by his children. For almost all without exception who have now risen to prominence as national workers, at least in Bengal, may be said to have once sat at the feet of Surendranath as humble students and disciples.

Up to the last day of his ripe old age he was

vigorously working for the cause which he loved most. May he now have his well-earned rest at the feet of God. Our sincere condolence goes to the bereaved family.

### HINDU MISSIONARIES TO GO ABROAD.

It was in the days of Emperor Asoka alone that 50,000 missionaries were sent all over the world to preach the religion of India outside her borders. Such organised attempts backed by the fiery zeal of the followers of the Lord to spread his message abroad were responsible for the fact that Indian thoughts did once influence the whole world civilisation. The religions of China, Japan and all Eastern Asia were influenced by Indian philosophy. Westward the influence of Indian civilisation was felt in the farthest corner of Central Asia and Bactria. Asoka's pillar and inscription could be found in Antioch in Palestine. There are good reasons to believe that even Christianity was greatly influenced by the religion of India. The Greeks who came in contact with the Hindus were greatly influenced by them, and according to some Plato's *Republic* bears distinct marks of the influence of Hindu political philosophy. It is said that the Imperial Library of Pekin in China contains 70 thousand Indian books original and translated. A close student of history daily meets with startling facts and interesting revelations as to the influence of Indian culture far and wide.

Recently Mr. C. F. Andrews has brought out some articles tracing the Hindu-Buddhist civilisation in Java and Malay. In the June number of the 'Current Thought' he has made an attempt to show how Hindu civilisation was built and reached its zenith in the 12th century in the Khmer Empire whose centre was Cambodia. This Khmer Empire under the Hindu monarch Jayavarman VIII spread from the Bay of Bengal on one side to the Pacific Ocean on the other. "About eight hundred years ago," writes the author "this great Hindu civilisation was one of the chief world-factors in the Far East." Still now Cambodia bears monuments of ancient architecture and sculpture, which are awe-inspiring to the visitors. The city of

Angkor, the capital of the Khmer kingdom, contains the ruins of a vast temple, Angkor-Vat, which "may be named along with the pyramids as one of the wonders of the world."

But the noble race of Khmers is now in a dying condition. Their present state of degradation is simply pathetic and compels tears from the eyes of a visitor who knows their past glory. They have fallen away from their intellectual height and are, at present, a race of dull and lifeless people passing their days in meditation on the vanished glories. They show lack of energy and vitality in every sphere of activity, have lost all self-confidence and seem to be waiting only for the final extinction.

The author appeals in conclusion—"From India itself must go out to Cambodia and to Bali and to other centres, where Hinduism is not really dead, but only moribund, a new reviving message. It is, to me, a matter of intense and earnest longing, that some at least of the treasures of religious wisdom and devotion stored up in India should reach this Hindu race in its day of adversity and save it from extinction, just as a drowning man may be saved from utter death even at the last moment of exhaustion by a timely outstretched hand. . . . Knowing well how deep, in the heart, the tradition of the ancient faith of Hinduism is stored, I do not cease to hope that dying Cambodia may one day see a small band of religious enthusiasts from India, who may fan once more into a flame the still flickering light of Hindu culture in this far-off land."

There has come a time, when from many parts of the world great need and eagerness is evinced for the message of Hinduism. But Hinduism has never sought converts, just to swell the number of its adherents in the census. Whenever Hindus have gone out to preach they have done so more in a spirit of service than with the proud feeling of saving others. What is at present needed is that a large number of people, devotedly trying to realise the ideas of Hinduism in their own life, should make it again a real power and influence, so that hundreds of thirsty

souls from far and near may have real peace and joy taking shelter under its wings.

#### INDIA AND WORLD PROBLEMS.

If we analyse the thought-forces of the world, we find that an air of freedom pervades the whole atmosphere. No nation, to-day, wants to remain under the tutelage of another nation, however mighty or good, no citizen recognises the divine right of any person and as such can never trust himself to the care of any absolute monarch, and in family life under the pressure of the same influence we find that a child grows up with a strong individuality and a great faith in his own reason. Naturally this feeling of self-assertion and sense of freedom give rise to a great conflict of interest and state of unrest, when there is no cementing factor to unite all the contending forces. As a result of this, when the clash of arms rings loudest and the war fumes cover the whole atmosphere, sometimes religion comes with its present day feeble voice to cry halt and makes a desperate attempt to bring peace to the world. But the same spirit of struggle for supremacy runs even in the religious world. Each religion is trying to aggrandise itself at the cost of another and never is ashamed to assert its supremacy by crying down another. When such fight goes on between religion and religion, each professing to bring peace to the world and salvation in the next, we begin to lose faith in the words of any religion at all.

"Can the living religions of to-day give anything to satisfy the spiritual unrest of the world? This is the problem. Can Hinduism answer the needs of modern conditions?"—asks Prof. Taraknath Das in a paper presented before the World Brotherhood Conference in the Unity Church of Brooklyn, New York. His contention is "that with the spirit of Hinduism we do meet the challenge of the modern problems of spiritual life, if we seek to understand the spirit of Hinduism which is universal." Prof. Das is perfectly right in this, for Hinduism—or to use a more accurate term, Vedanta—recognises that

all religions are true, makes room for all the prophets of all the religions, it has never suffered from the ignominy of any intolerance.' This catholicity is not however the result of having no individual background at all. It has got its own standpoints, which makes it so all-embracing. Vedanta recognises the truth in all religions, because it recognises the infinite possibilities of a man,—for he is Divine. All religions are so many attempts for the God in man to assert Himself. This feeling of the innate Divinity makes a man dauntless and enables him "to defy all forms of social, political and religious tyranny of the world and cling to the truth realised."

Thus the solution of the modern social and political unrest of the world will come from India, the birth-place of Vedanta. When each man will seek to find the God in himself and recognise the same possibility in his neighbour, no clash of interest can take place. He who sees God in everything and everything in God can never hate another.

#### MORALS OF OUR YOUTHS.

Many observers of present day social life in India have pointed out the gradual decline of the high standard of morality, which was once the boast of our people and the envy of foreigners. The decadence is so very striking that some have been led to compare the present state of things to what was in Rome, just before her fall. This picture is no doubt very gloomy, but more pitiable is the condition of thousands of young men, who, in spite of themselves, succumb to the debasing influence of the times and surroundings for want of a helping hand. They have to struggle with all the agonies of a drowning man, till they give way in despair as no safe shelter is found till the last moment. They find no word of hope or encouragement from any quarter—on the contrary, the atmosphere around is such as to drag them downwards.

We live in an age when religion, which alone can save us from all pitfalls, has been set at nought. And

with that has come the influx of the influence of Western civilisation, creating in us innumerable desires for luxuries and enjoyments. Art, literature, science, philosophy have all combined together to create and justify a sordid life of enjoyment for man. Daily from the press is brought forth an enormous amount of literature—some even from writers who cannot shake off their responsibility—which directly or indirectly panders to the lower cravings of human nature. City life supplies innumerable sources of enjoyment which have got a very undesirable influence on the mind of a youth. Then there are, sometimes, subtler influences, as for instance, when in the name of art and truth morality is sacrificed. It is no wonder, therefore, that the moral degradation of the society should increase by leaps and bounds.

Those who want to resist the influence, not knowing the right path, wander in vain in wilderness and make their whole life miserable. Mahatma Gandhi, after analysing the whole situation in an issue of *Young India*, with his characteristic sincerity and practical wisdom observes—"Such of them as are prey to the vice are not vicious by nature. They are helplessly and thoughtlessly drawn to it..... They must understand too that nothing but a rigorously disciplined life will save them and the country from utter ruin. Above all unless they visualise God and seek His aid in keeping them from temptation, no amount of dry discipline will do them much good. Truly has the seer said in the Gita that 'desire persists though man may by fasting keep his body under restraint. Desire goes only when one has seen God face to face.' Seeing God face to face is to feel that He is enthroned in our hearts even as a child feels a mother's affection without needing any demonstration. Does a child reason out the existence of a mother's love? Can he prove it to others? He triumphantly declares, 'It is.' So must it be with the existence of God. He defies reason. But He is experienced. Let us not reject the experience of Tulsidas, Chaitanya, Ramdas and a host of other spiritual teachers even as we do not reject that



of mundane teachers." But unfortunately it is hard for many of us to believe that the experiences of the former are far more real and have wider effect on life than those of the latter.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

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Further contributions in aid of the Dispensary will be thankfully received and acknowledged.

Swami Madhavananda,  
President, Advaita Ashrama,  
Mayavati, Dt. Almora.

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# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

*3rd January, 1921.*

In the afternoon, in the course of a walk, the Swami said :

"It won't do to be exacting. One must forgive. L—— came away from the Math without permission, whereupon — expressed his disapproval by saying that he would have expelled him if he could. I said to him, 'Didn't your brother go away against Swamiji's wishes, during his illness? And what did Swamiji do with him?' Of course — could not give any reply. There cannot be any growth without freedom.

"One must behave in such a way that others may not have any occasion to pick a quarrel. Bad people always try to take an advantage."

Referring to the training of the Math he said, "Swami Brahmanandaji's idea is to let things take their own

course. This method is not without its advantage in certain cases.

"Many of his disciples cannot freely mix with him, and they write to me. I have answered many such letters. I refer them back to the Swami, but they write that they do not get answers to all their points.

"G—— is senior to S——, and so there is friction when he has to work under S——. I sometimes show a little more love for him, as, for instance, by supporting him against S——. I have warned the latter that he should never by word or action give vent to a spirit of bossing. But he cannot observe this always.

"—— is a good-hearted young man, but lacks common-sense a bit. S—— went away somewhere, having been scolded last night. He gave a little hint to —— about his intentions at the time, and —— ought to have informed me of it then and there. I sent him to call S—— back. He saw him on the bank of the Ganges, but did not speak to him. He reported to me, 'D—— said he was with S——, so that I might come back.' Well, I sent him on that special errand, and yet he returned without exchanging a word! One must exercise one's brains.

"At first he had a little trouble with S—— on the score of his seniority. But when he saw that S—— knew better how to serve me, he surrendered himself *wholly* to him. It is a very laudable spirit, no doubt, but one must use one's discretion also."

The Swami passed on to a different topic with the remark, "The great power of Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji is at the back, so the work of the Mission is going on smoothly, and new recruits are coming.

"Nowadays I advise all to stick to their posts. One must stay somewhere. So it is best to continue in a place where added experience will give greater facilities for work.

"Many people ask me questions on Swami Saradananda's *Lilaprasanga* (Dissertation on the Life of Sri Ramakrishna, in Bengali). I tell them, 'When the author

himself is there, why not ask him?' Then they say, 'What is your opinion on the matter?'

*4th January (Morning).*

The Swami was reading the *Vichitra Jagat* (The Wonderful World) by the late Principal Ramendra Sundar Trivedi. Eulogising the author he remarked in this connection :

"One can explain a thing if only one has a clear grasp of it, which is the outcome of concentration. Better still is meditation. At Srinagar I used to meditate on the Upanishads. It was a charming occupation. In this way eight Upanishads (the first eight) stuck to my memory. What is meditation but great absorption in a subject? By concentrating on a subject, its inner secrets come out of themselves.

"First you have to prepare the mind. After that, any subject to which you may apply it will stand explained. The method of controlling the mind is by seriously watching it for some length of time. It can be done both by love and by discipline, according to circumstances. The mind should be under your control—it must not be allowed to ride on you, for then the tables will be turned.

"Whatever one has the least attachment to, gives the mind a loop-hole to direct you as it pleases. You become a slave to it, which is not the case if you are unattached. Lust, attachment, and the like are one and the same thing, varying only in intensity. 'Therefore first control the senses, O Arjuna, and conquer lust which destroys one's knowledge and realisation' (Gita). One must turn the mind away before it gets attached to any object. Otherwise it is an impossible task."

The Swami praised a member of the Order, and referred to his versatile gifts. One of the audience said, "Please bless him that Sri Maharaj (Swami Brahma-nandaji) may be favourably disposed towards him." Thereupon the Swami replied, "Maharaj is no more displeased with him. I pleaded for him in a letter in which I wrote, 'Even the anger of a highly-gifted superior is

tantamount to a benediction.\* He replied favourably and asked me to bless him. He has changed much—is almost a new man, with a good deal of humility. Formerly he would have frictions with Swami —. One day I called him aside and said, 'Don't do like this. Look upon them all as you do upon Maharaj. Or you will come to grief.' He understood. His behaviour towards me has always been good.

"Yesterday I had an animated discussion with — on Non-co-operation. He said that Mr. Gandhi in the new resolution (at Nagpur) had to compromise, and so forth. I asked him to show how it could be considered as a going back upon the Calcutta resolution, and what was wrong in it. He could not furnish any grounds. He was bent on arguing, so won't listen to reason."

*(To be continued.)*

## OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Regarding some of the schemes of social reform which are considered essential for the advancement of our country, even those who are not in any sense orthodox find them unacceptable as being unsuited to the genius of our people. In this category should be included the abolition of caste system and the doing away with of the joint family. In the institution of caste many anomalies have crept in, and that the theories by which it is usually defended do not square with the practices is admitted by all. Most of these hold that the system should be mended but not destroyed. As to the joint family it would appear there is a growing section of people who regard it as a stumbling-block in the way of national progress. It will be idle to deny that in recent times economic and industrial conditions have come into being which greatly tend to disintegrate the joint family.

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\* A quotation from Sanskrit.

There is a school of thought which would not be satisfied with mere alterations in the institution of joint family to render it adaptable to modern conditions. These are opposed to mere reform, which in their opinion is only an attempt to embellish the exterior of our social body. They demand a thorough-going revolution, to do away with everything that smells of the past, in short, to begin on a clean slate altogether. They are out for the creation of a new India, a new culture and a new social mind. The reasons upon which such ultra-radical views are sought to be justified may be briefly stated as follows : It is urged that the joint family is the greatest impediment to the growth of healthy national consciousness in India on the ground that it stifles the freedom of the individual. The exercise of too much authority on the part of the father or the head of the family is an indefensible form of benevolent despotism which, whether in the case of the family or of the state, does not allow the individual to grow to his full height. The evil does not end here ; invariably the interests of the individual count for nothing and are always sacrificed for those of the group. Another objection is that by demanding exclusive loyalty of its members, the joint family stands as a rival to the state and prevents the people from an active identification with the interests of the state.



In the April number of the Viswa-bharati Quarterly, Prof. K. M. Panikkar observes about the joint family, 'Whatever the benefits it might have brought, it has been without doubt the most powerful force against the development of a strong social feeling in India'. The writer further believes that 'it has been the root cause of our physical degeneration, of the darkness in which our masses are buried, of the enthronement of authority in every detail of our life, and of the desperate fatalism that has become almost a national philosophy for us.' Some of the objections that are usually advanced against

the joint family system have already been mentioned. This institution is condemned also on the ground that it narrows down the circle of social interest by its tendency to form sub-castes by marriages, alliances and relationships and that it renders impossible a real home where alone the women can grow in perfect freedom and realise their numerous responsibilities. The absence of freedom of choice in marriage resulting in social degeneration, the abnormal rate of infant mortality, the insanitary crowd-life which the joint family necessitates and above all the ingrained feeling that authority, whether it be in state, religion, or social custom, is in itself sacred,—are some of the more serious objections which the same writer adduces for the abolition of the joint family altogether.

In a general way, these and similar criticisms of social institutions of this country might be met by exposing the fallacy of the critics in that they apply ideals and standards of the West as if these were absolutely desirable in themselves. Culture and civilisation may be of quite different types proceeding along divergent lines of evolution. It is a well-known fact that in Indian society, until recent times, the caste system and autonomous village institutions were working in full vigour. Consequently political life of the people found expression in forms peculiar to itself and different from those of the West. In recent times, owing to numerous causes these institutions have undergone disintegration. If this fact is ignored, it would be difficult to get at the real explanation of the apathy or the absence of the political consciousness of the people, judged by Western standard. That the village republics of India exhibited a remarkable degree of political wisdom and organisation, is a historical fact. It is needless to prove how the charge of the political apathy of the people has no legs to stand upon.

Before proceeding to examine the various criticisms that are levelled against the joint family, it is useful to remember that it is passing through a period of transition and has lost a good deal of its former influence. The joint family known to historians was of a patriarchal type and had ecclesiastical sanction behind it, and such a type in its pure form is rarely to be met with anywhere at the present day. There are no doubt joint families in name, but according to the laws administered by British Indian courts there are few or no limits to the rights of a coparcenary to the property of a joint family. Consequently the joint family is liable to be broken up at any moment at the will and pleasure of its individual members.



Perhaps the most serious defect of the joint family system is the narrowing of the field of individual responsibilities, initiative and enterprise. When the patriarch is not only in theory the absolute monarch, but in actual practice also has the power and the means to enforce his will as law upon the members of the family, idleness, economic stagnation, and similar evils are unavoidable. But at the present day neither law nor public opinion is in favour of any such primitive ideal of one man's rule, however beneficent that might be. Beyond these disadvantages the joint family system could not be held responsible for the want of political consciousness of the people. On the other hand, the tradition of the joint family naturally inculcates on the individuals a sense of mutual forbearance, a spirit of self-sacrifice and readiness to serve others, habits of co-operation etc., which far from being an obstacle to social progress are the very foundations upon which alone any stable corporate life could be built. It is argued that loyalty to the family has been a serious rival to the loyalty of the state. We are not aware of any valid reasons for such a view. The absence of interest in politics (in the Western sense of the term) of the masses of India must



be traced to other reasons than joint family, as has been indicated above. We might go further and challenge the validity of judging every society and civilisation by the sole standard of politics. The history of India bears ample testimony to the fact that the soul of her culture is in religion. In this respect even the most ordinary and illiterate peasant compares very favourably with the well-educated of the West. Also every religious upheaval in India has been invariably followed by remarkable achievements in all branches of thought and activity.

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The modern individualists charge the joint family with having a deadening influence upon the position of women. We are certainly for giving full rights and opportunities of growth to every one, woman as well as man. Here again, judged by the standard of the West, women of India do not enjoy certain forms of freedom. Unless one has learnt to appreciate the high and noble ideals at the back of our social organisation and the place accorded to the women, merely superficial observation will only give a false idea as to the position of women. In a word, the ideal of womanhood in the West is the wife, while in India motherhood is the end in view. This disparity in ideals leads to a world of difference in actual practice. For instance, while marriage is a sacrament to the Hindu, it is a mere contract to the Westerner. In spite of the absence of free choice, courtship and other romantic elements leading to marriage, domestic harmony and conjugal happiness have been and are even to-day much more common in India than elsewhere.

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In modern times, the struggle for existence is growing keener and keener. The ever increasing cost of living, the cut-throat competition that rules the commercial world and the precarious conditions of industrial life—

all these necessitate joint action even to ensure an ordinary measure of success. In agricultural industries, the advantages of joint ownership and joint activity are obvious. It is well-known that Indian agriculturists are unable to adopt the latest scientific and improved methods of cultivation on account of the fact that owing to the disruption of the joint family system the holdings have become too small for the purpose. The joint family provided in the past a most natural and compact field for mutual co-operation and joint enterprise both in business and agriculture. This need is present in a more accentuated form to-day. So the wise method should be not to destroy the joint family which has stood the onslaught of centuries, but to make only those changes which will make it more efficient under modern conditions. Even in towns where the tendencies that militate against the joint family are at the maximum, business firms that were originally run on joint family lines controlled entirely by the family head, sometimes continue to be undivided, although the family ties of the members have broken and they live separately. Common messing and monthly division of expenditure, while the individual earnings are kept apart, also illustrate the same tendency.



We have attempted to show that neither the interests of the individual for free growth nor the rights and liberties of woman, nor even the economic interests of the members must necessarily be sacrificed in a joint family. Whatever disadvantages there might yet be found in the institution, it seems to us that the advantages are greater. Most of the critics of our social institutions seem to be obsessed with politics. For our own part, we believe the spiritual interest of the personality to be of the utmost importance, and consequently political interests, social welfare, economic efficiency etc., are but means to this supreme goal. Thousands of years ago, leaders of Indian thought with a clear vision of the deeper

realities of life devised a scheme of life in which every faculty of man had its proper place and function. The four 'Purusharthas'—धर्म (duty), अर्थ (wealth), काम (enjoyment) and मोक्ष (freedom) indicate the scale of values which they attached to respective interests of life. Unless one learns to be familiar with their point of view, one cannot understand the deeper foundations upon which our society is built and the line of evolution which it has been following for thousands of years. Consistent with this backbone of our race, we welcome any reform that will bring more efficiency to our institutions.

## PESTALOZZI AND INDIAN EDUCATION.

17, Bose Para Lane.  
Baghbazar, Calcutta.  
*July 28, 1903.*

DEAR SWAMI AKHANDANANDA,

Your long letter, enquiring about the Kindergarten system of education, has not been forgotten by me, but I have been very busy and yet was anxious to send you a reply that could be translated into Bengali, and published, both in English, and in that language. So I have had to wait, in order to find time. To-day, I hope I have it.

You say, a general order has gone out that all primary schools are to use Kindergarten methods in teaching, and that the teachers are much alarmed and disturbed at this. I should be glad, if it could be arranged, to give some detailed help. I could perhaps take a group of teachers and give several lessons and lectures a day, for one week. But I would like to be assured of a group of teachers large enough and industrious enough, to be worth such an effort. I could not afford time or strength to do it for one or two only.

Also, you have not sent me a copy of the Education Department's instruction on the subject. So that I write to you, rather in the dark, and in only general terms.

But I have no doubt that Indian intelligence will very quickly prove itself equal to the new task offered to it, and—instead of finding the Government order an insuperable difficulty placed in the way of education and making it expensive and incomplete,—will be able to turn it into a positive boon, deepening and intensifying its own power greatly. Yet, if this is to be, it can only be through a general understanding of the *principles* underlying the Kindergarten system of training. So I shall try to make these principles clear.

At the beginning of the 19th century, there lived in Switzerland a man of the Sannyasin spirit and an immense love of the people, called *Pestalozzi*. This man's love led him to feel that education is the only service man can offer to man. (I used to believe that he was right here, but under the influence of India, I have come to think that we can also serve by making free. This bestowal of freedom is perhaps another name of Love. So there are two deeds.)

Pestalozzi, then, tried to give education. But he was always stopping, and asking questions of himself. In this way, he tried to discover the *law*, the psychology of education. And in the course of a long life he discovered that most people are unable to think clearly because they have no clear *knowledge*. Now, what is *knowledge*? It is something that is the result of experience. Without experience, there can be no knowledge. (Even the doctrine of Reincarnation does not upset the statement: it only modifies it, by saying, 'All experience does not begin here.' But I want you to realise very strongly that we are talking now of that knowledge which is to be acquired by this brain with which you are now dealing. In the soul behind this brain, in the mind which uses it, there may be memories lying ready to be re-awakened, but our problem is to make this brain a strong and complete tool for this mind.

If such be our purpose, then, as regards this brain, the following statements and arguments are true.) No knowledge without experience,—then how to acquire experience? Pestalozzi answered: Through our senses—by sensation.

He came indeed to the conclusion that in the act of realising any piece of knowledge there are three processes, (1) sensation, (2) thought-germination, (3) expression. The second process means that the experience must be in the mind and take root there as a thought. You will be able to express all this in Indian terms—Manas, Buddhi, soul, reaction etc. But sensation is first. Thus, I say  $2+2=4$ . I *know* this. I say also—"He whose mind is fixed on sameness etc." Do I *know* this? Or is it only that I have a belief in it? Alas, you know you would not like to risk your life on mere knowledge of the great text. But you would, quite cheerfully, on my clearness about  $2+2=4$ . Why have I *knowledge* in the one case, and not in the other? What is the difference? Is it not in experience, in sensation? All my life I have seen two things added to two things, making four things. I have seen it with my eyes, felt it with my hands, realised it in carrying burdens, counted it in listening to music, perceived it through smell and taste, and so on. Pestalozzi concluded that *we must base all education on concrete sensation*. But how was this to be done?

So for the Guru. In his old age, when he was broken and infirm, and the world laughed at, and despised him, Pestalozzi found his disciple, Friedrich Fröbel.

Fröbel caught the great idea. He saw that our whole life is an education in one sense, and that if we wanted to understand the law of mind when knowledge-gathering, in order to carry out an artificial scheme of training, for special or social purposes, we must watch a baby, in the process of adding faculty to faculty. He saw that knowledge has only justified itself when it has become *faculty*, a power within the mind. He saw that

*the development of the child*, not the teaching of letters or numbers, was the true end of the true teacher. He wrote a great book, called "The Education of Man," and he began to watch the play of children.

What did he find? You can see the same in any village-street in India. Children play with mud, with cow-dung, with bricks, or stones, or straw, or anything that one can touch, and move, and form, and repeat one's act with, over and over again. He saw that each such play was a development of faculty—a self-education of the child. He analysed the ends and methods of the play. The result was his Kindergarten, the Children's garden, where the teacher is gardener, and every child a plant.

Children love a ball, because it moves more like an animal than any other toy. They love colour too. So at a very early age, Fröbel gave them six bright balls of different colours. Years hence, the child will like a kite, because it is so like a bird. But Fröbel did not like to bring his suggestion so far as this. And I am glad of this. For though his discovery was great, it is well to leave teachers free to make their own experiments, and a great completeness is a great bondage.

From gift I, then, the child learns to practise movements in play—a mouse—a beetle—a toy—the ball is everything by turns. *The teacher encourages the child to imagine.*

All the children act together—order, discipline, amidst all the fun. It is play, but it is also co-operation. One by one they choose their favourite colours—name them, recognise them.

Every act, every colour, brings a word. And since everything is learnt by contrast, we have to master each new idea as a pair of opposites—two words at a time. Thus—up : down ; east : west ; in : out ; here : there, etc. One great difference between the educated class and the uneducated is this, that the uneducated have so little language. A child well-taught from the beginning is put in the way to add constantly to his own language.

Presently, you will be giving *free* balls, cricket balls, tennis balls, footballs, or rag balls etc. and encouraging free play with them. The ball has become an element in the child's life now. He must be inspired to do everything he can, with it, on his own account, and in school.

Gifts 2 to 7. Gifts of architecture and design, form and number.

Gift 3. The favourite eight cubes. They must first be used in play—building house, well, compound, factory, chimney etc. All this is mere play. You may use them in telling stories. The Battle of Kurukshetra—opposing armies—this brick is the chariot of Arjuna—one there Bhima's, and so on.

When this gift is well loved, you may take it as a number-lesson. Or use it always in arithmetic, in history, in everything, but keep one half hour for its special joy. In arithmetic, count the cubes. Lay in a line—a square—oblong—octagon—and so on and so forth. Ask for pattern, stars, palm-trees etc. Then, the whole is a sweetmeat. Cut in two. How many in each half? Or in quarters—how many? Or give equal parts to one boy. How many cubes? To two boys—how many? Then what part of eight is four? And so on.

After weeks spent on gift 3, other weeks should be given to gift 4, next referring to its predecessor. Again, they may be used together. Or you may, if you prefer, go on to 5 and 6, using them in the same way, and introducing the child to true fraction, and returning to mix the gifts, afterwards. Again, a similar process might be gone through by using paper money, pieces cut and coloured, however roughly, to represent rupees, annas, pice, and the children may be taught to count it. *One ought to be able to do compound addition and subtraction before simple, because the concrete is really easier than the abstract!* You see, the fact is that you ought to try never to teach a subject, without making it first the subject of concrete physical sensation, and if you will try to do this, with any success, you may, before you die, invent a whole new Kindergarten of your own. A good

mathematics master, who will try to bring arithmetic notation down to the concrete, will find nothing really invented by Fröbel for the purpose. Yet the thing is easily done and never forgotten by the child so trained. He might use seeds or beads or pebbles for the purpose: 10 small = 1 large, 10 large = 1 largest, thus 1 largest = 100 small, and so on.

Presently, but not at once, the time comes to teach the child to express on paper what he knows so well. But if you are still following the mind of the child, and trying to develop that, and if the previous stages have been well done, you do not know how easy this will be. " $2+2=4$ ". It is nothing to him who knows it with eyes and hands and ears and tongue and everything! Even " $4^2=16$ " is nothing to a very small person trained to think completely.

Fröbel's gift 7 is simply a box of tiles, which is chiefly delightful for making patterns, and thus unconsciously teaching oneself design.

We come now to the use of *materials* by Fröbel. He gave children clay and straw and beads and paper and fibres, and various things, and encouraged them to *make* what they could.

One great doctrine taught by Pestalozzi had been that the *child in its development follows the race*. So according to this doctrine, the school-room is a primitive society. The child provided with clay is the early potter, or smith, or baker; with paper or fibre he may be a weaver, and so on.

Again, if we watch the play of young animals, we find that they are teaching themselves to fly or swim or run, to hunt, to build their own homes, to fight, etc. All these things, children should learn in *games*, or in mere chaotic play, invented by themselves. Every self-activity of a child should be studied, encouraged, understood, and left free by the sympathetic teacher.

These are a few hints, dear Swami, as to the principles on which the Kindergarten system is based. But I do not think the Education Department very wise in



giving an order so general, without a better understanding on its own part of the common Indian life, and the point in which the educational need is really met already. For instance, *clay* is a material which is cheap in India, and in which every Indian child is likely to do well, and the Education Department would have done better, if it had contented itself with issuing a circular on the use of this one material in schools. Every illiterate builder can model. All ladies used to make beautiful clay plates. I have seen lovely forms and designs.

Drawing is so easily and commonly learnt in making the *Alpana*, and decorating them with rice-flour patterns. I have seen most beautiful paper-cutting from the Sylhet valleys, which was quite as good as any European lace. And if the Department had understood enough to adopt these simple Indian industries, and adapt them, also, to the necessities of the schoolroom, it would have shown itself possessed of a deeper knowledge of education than I am at present prepared to attribute to it.

The right course is not to introduce a foreign process, but to take home-art, and develop it along its own lines, carrying it to greater ends, by growth from within.

For instance, no Indian school can possibly be supplied with gifts 1 to 7. They are far too expensive. But we can take the rag balls of the bazaar, and teach babies to play with them, and we can pick up eight seeds by way of experimenting gift 3 or 4, and count and divide, and tell tales, and even build a little. We can learn form and fraction, by making cubes and bricks and pyramids of clay, and so forth.

India cannot swallow the Kindergarten as practised in Germany. But she can learn to *understand* that, and then make one of her own, different in details, but concordant in intention, and to ask her to do anything else is only to make ourselves ridiculous in the eyes of educators, both in Germany itself and the world over.

I am sending to England for books and specimens for you. Meanwhile, I feel much tempted to write a book on the thing as it really might be done in India.

The religious education of Hinduism is a complete development not only of the religious, but also of the domestic and social mind. But the Department does not understand this. The image is a means of basing the idea of divine mercy on concrete sensation. The girls' *Vratas*, the cow-puja, and fifty other things, are a complete inclusion of this theory in Hinduism itself, and the right way would be to start from them, and so further if possible. Meanwhile, the beginning of education may be in the concrete, but its end lies in the trained attention, and power of concentrating the mind—and that India understands, as Europe never can.

Ever faithfully yours,

Nivedita, of Rk.-V.

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—SOME IMPRESSIONS.\*

BY A DEVOTEE.

The nature of the subject is such that everything that can be said will, after being said, leave the impression that most things that had to be said, were left unsaid. And then, in the intense life which Swami Vivekananda lived, every detail is so interrelated with every other detail that it can never be said after the most profound discourse that even one detail has been adequately treated in all its aspects. All that is attempted in this lecture, therefore, is only to say a few words on some of the outstanding incidents of the Swami's career, on some of his great qualities and on a few of the results of his life's work.

Even before the Swami became the spiritual son of his great Guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, his career, as a brilliant and accomplished young man, had stood out in its full effulgence before everybody who came to

\* The substance of a lecture delivered on the birthday celebration.

know him. The range of his studies, the loftiness of his character, his intense desire to get to the root of things, specially of matters religious—all these impressed his relatives, friends and acquaintances that he was destined to be a very great man, though they knew not how exactly the greatness that they devoutly and surely anticipated would be achieved. His filial love to his mother was most exemplary. One can imagine what an anguish of heart must have come upon the noble lady when her son, to whom, she with others who knew the tradition of the family surely trusted, would appertain the glory of the rehabilitating the family fortunes, had decided to become a Sannyasin. Yes, her heart was rent, but she with a seer's prescience consented to her sacrifice with the result that through her son India looked up and was blessed. A few parallels of such supreme renunciation naturally occur to the mind. When Sri Rama, for instance, decided to go into the forest in pursuance of his duty by the orders of his father, Kausalya Devi, though her heart was full of grief, blessed him in those never to be forgotten lines of the Ayodhyakanda of the Ramayana. When Sri Sankara, again, wanted to become a Sannyasin, his mother, weeping and crushed with grief at the coming change, blessed her son to go forth and save the world.

The spiritual unrest that was agitating the mind and whole being of the ardent youth knew no quietude till Sri Ramakrishna took him under the fold of his spiritual protection and fashioned out of him the Swami Vivekananda who was destined to carry the great Master's message not only throughout the length and breadth of India but beyond the seas. The great Master Sri Ramakrishna Deva is best described in the words of his most distinguished and peerless disciple—"The time was ripe for one to be born who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Sankara and the wonderfully expansive infinite heart of Chaitanya—one who would see in every sect the same Spirit working, the same God—one whose heart would weep for the poor, for the weak, for

the outcast, for the down-trodden, for every one in this world, inside India or outside India—and at the same time whose grand brilliant intellect would conceive of such noble thoughts as would harmonise all conflicting sects, not only in India but outside of India, and bring a marvellous harmony, the universal religion of head and heart into existence. Such a man was born, and I had the good fortune to sit at his feet for years." The Guru or the spiritual preceptor has always been held in the highest esteem by us. Do we not believe that the spiritual birth is better and of far higher value than actual birth? For in the latter the mere body is born, whereas in the former the man is made. When Swami Vivekananda thus spoke of his Guru, he meant every word of it, we may be sure. As to the influence on himself, he says in his lecture on *'The sages of India'*—"Let me say now, that if I have told you one word of truth, it was his and his alone, and if I have told you many things which were not true, which were not correct, which were not beneficial to the human race, they were all mine, and on me is the responsibility". As is said by one of his contemporaries—"Swami Vivekananda's success was due to his unbounded faith in the words of his spiritual Master, who is now regarded, honoured, revered, respected and worshipped in India and other countries as the Incarnation of Divinity. The great Master, foreseeing the future grandeur and greatness of the soul of Swami Vivekananda, inspired him several times in the presence of his other disciples by saying, "Thou hast a great work to perform. Thy mission in life is to spread the truth of the Universal Religion."

The Parivrajaka experience of Swami Vivekananda is most unique and was a fitting precursor to the period when he gave his message to the world. His purpose was to be lost to all that he held near and dear and wander staff and begging bowl in hand as a free Sannyasin, having only his soul for companionship. As his disciples, both Eastern and Western, say in their great work of love, *'The Life of the Swamiji'*—"The days

of the Leader as the wandering monk are the most interesting of all. They are full of spiritual romance. As the Parivrajaka, the Leader would force asceticism upon himself, many times concealing his great learning and his knowledge of the English language, in order to appear as an ordinary Sadhu." But he could not conceal his radiance under the bushel, and everywhere he was most eagerly sought after. In the words of Kalidasa, "A gem is never secret ; it is always seen." The itineracy included distant places in the Himalayas, in Rajputana, in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, in our own beloved Mysore and as far south as Cape Comorin. In fact, he, so to say, boxed the compass of India's places of sanctity, renown and learning as did Sankara in centuries past. He underwent the most thrilling experiences—sometimes trying and dangerous too. He was equally at home with the prince and the peasant, with the wealthy man and the beggar. He thus went on, perfecting his spiritual experience and finally coming to a definite resolution regarding the work that lay before him.

About the time his Parivrajaka wanderings were coming to a close, he felt himself impelled to go to the West. As he said—"It is for the people of India that I am going to the West—for the people and the poor." The World's Fair at Chicago was to come off soon, and something seemed to tell him that an international assembly of preachers and divines of different faiths like the Parliament of Religions would be a great opportunity for bringing Hinduism to the hearing of the Western world. In his epoch-making address before that assembly he revealed "a wonderful perception of the unity of the Indian religious ideals, a unity that had not yet been self-consciously expressed in the communal consciousness of Hinduism—the development of which in this respect he preached later as a crying need if India should arise." The principal contribution to Hinduism that the Swami's address embodied was first the philosophical and religious synthesis of the faith of his forefathers, second, the idea of the mother church embrac-

ing all the forms of religious experience from the lowest to the highest, and third, though not the last, the immovable position that he accorded to Hinduism by his scholarly and spiritual interpretation of its tenets, winning for it prestige among the enlightened thinkers and the theologians of the West, and raising it in the estimation of the whole Western world. To impress the entire American nation with a new thought was no easy task. And to do so by a few years of work was all the more wonderful. Not content with the success of his work in America, the Swami as early as August, 1894 meditated a trip to England. He desired that the whole Western world should hear of the message of Asia and the glory of the Indian Dharma. While there, he preached and taught the universal theme of the Vedanta and the four Margas or paths of the highest spiritual realisation. In reply to an interviewer, the Swami said that he had come to organise no sect, but to give the general outlines of the synthetic principles of the Vedanta and to let each apply them in his own case. He said—"I am the exponent of no occult societies, nor do I believe that good can come of such bodies. Truth stands on its own authority and truth can bear the light of day." He said, "Each soul is potentially Divine. The goal is to manifest this Divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work or worship or psychical control, or philosophy, by one or more, or all of these, and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples or forms are but secondary details." To his own country, which was the subject of his inmost thoughts and of his loving solicitude even when he was in far off lands, he gave the best of his life's work. With the great sympathy he enlisted in the two great countries of the West, England and America, he came back to India and in course of time founded the noble band of the brothers of the Ramakrishna Mission, those high-souled and pure-minded men who are present wherever the service of their fellowmen needs them, who seek no recognition,

but are anxious for opportunities to serve. So long as he lived, even when his physical body needed rest, he would always personally teach and instruct whomsoever he came into contact with, Gurubhais or strangers, old or young, laymen or Pandits. In fact, one marvels at his conversations, of which, happily for the world, a great portion has been recorded by his loving brothers and disciples which are veritable flashes from the beacon fire and which constitute, in some respects, the best part of his work.

One great quality of his and the one which he insisted on all people to have was the love of truth. For himself, he said on one occasion—"Do you think an honest Sannyasin will be afraid of speaking the truth, whatever it may cost him, even if it cost him his life?" He would never surrender his independence of thought, and he said he would not call any man a Hindu who did any such thing. His ideal was evidently Sri Rama of whom it was said by Sita, "He will not give wrongly, he will not take wrongly, and he will not say an untruth even for his life's sake, for his prowess is centred on Truth."

His love for all was characteristic of whatever he did. It was, in fact, the very breath of his life. He said once—"Live in any caste you like, but that is no reason why you should hate another man or any caste. It is love and love alone that I preach, and I base my teaching on the great Vedantic truth of the sameness and omnipresence of the Soul of the universe." Again, "Denunciation is not at all the way to do good. All of us have to be taught that we Hindus, dualists, qualified monists or monists or any other sects, such as Saivas, Vaishnavas, Pasupatas—all these various denominations have certain common ideas behind them, and that the time has come when for the well-being of our race we must give up all our little quarrels and differences. Be sure these quarrels are entirely wrong." In fact, it would be no exaggeration at all to say that you may open any page of any work of his at random, and there you are sure to find this

spirit of love to all pervading the sentences that form his matchless and inimitable diction. And his love was not confined to those of the Hindu religion or to the Indian race. He addressed his great message at Chicago to his "Sisters and Brothers of America." He wound up his address at the final session of the Parliament of Religions by declaring—"The Christian is not to become a Hindu or Buddhist, nor a Hindu or Buddhist a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to the law of growth." As one of his American pupils said—"Vivekananda came to us with a wonderful message—'I do not want to convert you to a new belief,' he said, 'I want you to keep your own belief; I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist, the Presbyterian a better Presbyterian, the Unitarian a better Unitarian. I want to teach you to live the truth, to reveal the light within your own soul.'"

The Swami was a born leader of men. He showed signs of this even in the early days of trial and tribulation, his College days and Parivrajaka life. Among the followers who worked hardest for him was Mr. J. J. Goodwin, the stenographer who hailed from England, who served throughout his own life and of whom the Swami often said, "What would I do without him? If I have a mission, he is indeed a part of it." Of that illustrious English disciple, the sister Nivedita, who for fifteen years till her passing devoted herself untiringly to the cause of India and to the spread of the Swami's ideas, religious, educational and social, for the regeneration of his Motherland, the greatest glory is that she has given to the world that great biography of the Swamiji, "The Master as I saw him," which may be placed among the choicest religious classics and among the best biographies of the English language. Her "Web of Indian Life" is another great work describing our valued institutions with an insight and love which would do credit to our greatest and most far-seeing patriots. Among his Gurubhais he was ever the worshipped and adored one.



One is thrilled with joy to recount the incident how the Swami explained to Prof. Wright of the Harvard University the difficulties that stood in the way of his representing Hinduism in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, because he had no credentials, and how the Professor, with whom he had only for the last few hours been discussing all manner of subjects, spoke out, "To ask you, Swami, for your credentials is like asking the sun its right to shine," and took it on himself to see that the Swami was admitted as a delegate representing Hinduism.

His great contribution to the religious thought of the world was the presentation of the Hindu religion and its ideals in its proper light. He emphatically denied at the very outset that there was polytheism, or idolatry in India. He explained the psychological necessity of lower forms of religious ideas and worship, of prayers as aids to the purification of mind and of image-worship as a help to spiritual concentration. "The Hindus," he pointed out, "have associated the ideas of holiness, purity, truth, omnipresence and such other ideas with different images and forms." It was not the idol which was really worshipped, but the representation of Divinity in the devotee's inner spiritual life, of which the image was but the means of objectification. He maintained that with the Hindus, moreover, religion is not centred in doctrinal assent or dissent, but in realisation, and that, in this light, forms and symbols and ceremonies are only the supports, the helps of spiritual childhood, which the Hindu gradually transcends as he progresses towards spiritual manhood; and also that these helps are not necessary for everyone or compulsory in Hinduism. He saw "unity in variety" in religion and said, "Contradictions come from the same truth adapting itself to the varying circumstances of different natures."

He thought of India as the heart of Aryan life with Hinduism as the very core of its being. He said, India shall rise through the restoration of that highest spiritual consciousness which has made India at all times the

cradle of religion. "Work out the salvation of this land and of the whole world," he asked, "each of you thinking that the entire burden is on your shoulder. Carry the light and the life of the Vedanta to every door, and rouse up the Divinity that is hidden within every soul."

The Swami said in a lecture—"My idea is, first of all, to bring out the gems of spirituality that are stored up in our books, and in the possession of a few only, hidden, as it were, in monasteries and in forests—to bring them out; to bring the knowledge out of them, not only out of the hands where it is hidden, but from the still more inaccessible chest, the language in which it is preserved, the incrustation of centuries of Sanskrit works. In one word, I want to make them popular. . . . The great difficulty in the way is the Sanskrit language, this glorious language of ours, and this difficulty cannot be removed until, if it is possible, the whole of our nation are good Sanskrit scholars. You will understand the difficulty when I tell you that I have been studying this language all my life and yet every new book is new to me." In what ample and overflowing measure he fulfilled his purpose is known to all who have read his writings or the records of his conversations. He took the common language English and made it the vehicle of his thoughts in the purest, clearest and most convincing style.

His attitude to the various problems of the day, the education of women, the uplifting of the low, etc., was wonderfully practical and constructive. He was for giving them the best education, so that they might solve their own problems. His firm belief was that love in its broadest sense would cure all evils and solve all troubles and difficulties.

The above are but a few of the impressions of the great personality whose birthday we celebrate to-day. His teachings are great and enduring for all time, and yet in looking at his life we may say of him, using his own words, that he stands before us, startling, gigantic, impressive, a world-moving person of more magnitude even than his teachings.

## THE ART OF CONCENTRATION.\*

BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA.

The spiritual life of a man or a woman depends upon the subjugation of the senses, the control of passions and the manifestation of the Divine powers latent in every individual soul. There are different methods to realise this end ; and these methods are known as *Yogas*. The method of concentration, or meditation, is known by the name of Raja Yoga or the royal road to realisation. This is known as the king of all methods, because without the power of concentration nothing is achieved.

The great poet-philosopher Emerson has rightly said, "The one prudence in life is concentration, the one evil is dissipation. Concentration is the secret of strength in politics, in war, in trade—in short, in the management of all human affairs." No logic or philosophy is needed to prove the truth of this statement. Wherever there is success or achievement in any field of knowledge or culture, there is applied this power of concentration. The more this power is developed, the more marvellous are the results. All the discoveries in the realm of nature, inventions of machines and of other things which we see to-day, in short, all the amazing achievements of modern culture and civilisation are nothing but the results of application of the power of concentrated attention. If a born genius suddenly loses the power of concentration, he will act like an idiot ; and if the idiot develops this power of concentration, he will be a genius. In a word, concentration is the source of all knowledge and all power.

Each individual possesses the power of concentration and applies it in his or her own way consciously or unconsciously. A child expresses this power by fixing

its gaze upon shining objects or upon the loving face of its mother. The spontaneous attention expressed in children or in animals and uncultured persons is at first directed towards objects that are most necessary for the sustenance of the physical life, or that are pleasing to the senses. But as the individuals grow in the scale of evolution, their attention is not only fixed upon objects pleasing to the senses, but is directed towards objects that are attractive to the intellect and the higher nature. Here begins voluntary attention, and this leads to intellectual culture. When the attention is directed towards the observance of moral laws and right actions that are beneficial not only to ourselves but to humanity, that leads to moral culture. And again when this attention is directed towards the Universal Spirit, or God, it gives us the highest wisdom and leads to the attainment of the summum bonum of life.

The sages of India discovered by analysis, observation and experiment that the powers of the mind are infinite. As there is the vast sheet of water behind the little bubbles, ripples and waves on an ocean, so there is the Infinite power, the power of Divinity Itself, as the background of every individual soul. We have only to discover and apply it. There is no difference between an ordinary man and the man of genius or the greatest sage, in *kind*, but only in the *degree* of manifestation of this power. And the art of concentration teaches us how to manifest that Divine power.

The powers of the mind are scattered like the rays of an electric light. The electric light can give light within a limited space, but it can be made to illumine distant objects if we know how to gather the different rays and focus them into one beam, as is done with the search-light. Similar is the mind of a Yogi. He gathers together the different rays and concentrates on the Invisible and the Unknowable, and there shines the highest wisdom and infinite bliss for him.

This higher form of concentration has been defined by Patanjali, the father of Indian Yoga philosophy, as

चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः—the control of the modifications of the mind-stuff.

This requires a little explanation. And if we can understand the real significance of this aphorism of Patanjali, we shall also know the process of concentration.

Let us first try to understand what is meant by *chitta*, or the mind-stuff. You all know that for every perception we first need the instruments. The eyes are the instruments of vision. Behind the instruments are the organs. These organs are the nerve centres in the brain. Then again, there is the mind back of these organs. The mind must be attached to the organs before any perception is possible. Suppose you are listening to my lecture attentively. There is the sound of a bell, and then you do not hear the speaker. The other sound has struck the ear, has been carried to the brain, and you could not hear me, because your mind was not attached to the organ. Back of the mind, again, there is the discriminative faculty—the intellect which reacts, and with this reaction arises the idea of egoism. Then this whole process of action and reaction is carried to the Purusha, the Light of lights, the Intelligent Self, and then alone we perceive. Thus in every perception we go through the whole of this process. First there are the instruments, then the organs, then the mind, back of that is the intellect and *ahamkara* or egoism, and back of all these is the resplendent Intelligent Self of man. The organs (*indriyas*), together with the mind (*manas*), the determinative faculty (*buddhi*) and egoism (*ahamkara*), form the group called the *antahkārana* (the internal instrument). They are but various processes in the mind-stuff, called *chitta*.

Next, what is meant by *vritti*, or the modifications of the mind-stuff?

The waves of thought in the *chitta* are called *vrittis*, or modifications of the mind-stuff.

How are these *vrittis*, or waves of thought, produced?—By the contact of the mind-stuff with the

external universe,—by its contact with matter. "Matter is the permanent possibility of sensations,"—says John Stuart Mill. The external universe, matter, gives the suggestion. All we know is the mental reaction to the outer suggestion. The objective universe is the occasion of the reaction of the mind. Take an oyster, for example. You all know how pearls are formed. A foreign substance gets inside the shell and causes an irritation, and the oyster throws a sort of enamel around it, and this makes the pearl. The inner world of sense experience is our own enamel, so to say, and the outside universe is the irritating intruder serving as the nucleus.

Thus you understand what is meant by *chitta*. It is the mind-stuff, and *vrittis* are the waves and ripples rising in it when external causes impinge on it.

Now let us consider why we have to control the modifications of the mind-stuff. We cannot see the bottom of a lake when there are ripples and waves on its surface. But if these can be made to subside, we can see what lies at the bottom of the lake. The mind-stuff can be compared to a lake, and the Self, whose nature is said to be *Satchidananda*, lies at the bottom of the lake of the mind-stuff. The nature of the Self is hidden from our sight because there are the modifications, the thought-waves, on the surface of the lake. Again, the mind has three states, one of which is called *tamas*—the dull or the idiotic state of the mind. The lake, or the *chitta*, is said to be muddy in this state. No knowledge or understanding is possible in this state of the mind. *Rajas* is the active state of the mind, one full of desires and impulses. The waves of the lake are too high, as it were. *Sattva* is the calm or the serene state of the mind. All the waves have subsided, so to speak, and at the bottom of the clear water shines the True Self. This is not an inactive or dull state of the mind, as people often misunderstand it to be, but it is the perfection of the highest activity, the manifestation of the greatest strength. If you let the horses take the

bit, you are carried away. But it requires greater strength and the manifestation of higher activity to check the horses from running away. The calm man is the one who has control over the mind-waves. Activity is the manifestation of inferior strength, calmness of the superior.

If we can remain in that state for some time, the highest wisdom, the highest knowledge, will be revealed unto us. This state of concentration has been described by Patanjali as तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम्—“At that time the seer rests in his own unmodified state.” In short, we become ourselves. The mine of bliss, the mine of knowledge, is discovered within.

But nothing can be achieved in a day. We have to constantly practise with great perseverance before we can hope to attain to that state of realisation. अभ्यास-वैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः—“Their control is by practice and non-attachment,” says Patanjali. In the first place, we must have non-attachment. Unless we have *vairagya*, non-attachment for the things of the world, for the pleasures of the senses, our mind cannot be concentrated on the Divine Being. They dissipate our energy, take away our vitality, make us restless and subject to misery. And it is only when we become non-attached that we can perseveringly practise concentration.

This *practice* has been defined as “holding the mind to certain points.” If we can hold our mind to a certain point, to a certain idea to the exclusion of other thoughts, our mind’s vagaries cease, and there arises calmness and serenity.

Various methods and practices are known to the Yogis of India. It is not possible to mention them in a lecture like this. But I will mention one practice which, if you try regularly, will help you a great deal in progressing towards the highest goal of realisation. Try to hold your mind to the centre of your heart. It will be of help to use a little imagination. Imagine there is a lotus in the centre of the heart. And in the centre of

the lotus there is the effulgent light. Concentrate on that light.

Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master, used to say, "Be like the pearl-oyster." There is an Indian fable to the effect that when the *Svati* star arises in the sky, if a drop of rain falls inside the oyster, that drop turns into a pearl. The oysters know this and come out and remain afloat to let a drop of rain fall on them when the *Svati* star rises in the sky. As soon as one drop falls, it goes to the bottom of the lake and remains there shut up until the pearl is formed. So be like that pearl-oyster in the fable. Hear about the Ideal. Take up the Ideal and shut up your mind to other disturbing thoughts. Be mad for that Ideal. Think about it, dream about it ; and out of that thought on the Ideal will be formed the pearl of the manifestation of the Divine Bliss.

## MYSTERY OF MOTHER'S PLAY.\*

BY SWAMI TRIGUNATITA.

There is no better way to Truth than to invoke the help of Mother Nature and to pray to Her for guiding our life. Why should we seek Her help? Because if we are seekers of Truth, our search must be based on observation ; and as we see Nature within and without—all being Nature's play, we must have to ask Her to show us the way to life.

What life is really blessed? Is this life we live satisfactory? Certainly not. For here we live in eternal ignorance ; we are always in the dark ; everything seems wonderful and mysterious. We want to solve the mystery, but cannot. We must know what is the purpose of life and try to fulfil that and not give our life to eating

\* Notes from a discourse given by the Swami in America. Swami Trigunatita was one of those pioneer members of the Ramakrishna Mission who went to preach Vedanta abroad. He passed away in America in 1915.



and drinking like animals without having any reasoning faculty. There must be a certain purpose behind our life.

When we are awakened to the consciousness that Truth and Bliss are clouded by ignorance, we want to break the mystery and see Truth.

But we find it is so very difficult to realise Truth. We try our best, still we fail to tear the veil of this world, to see Truth. The world's attractions are so great that very easily we forget our purpose in life. One moment we get the intention to know Truth, but the next moment we forget it.

The law that we forget the purpose of our life seems so invincible. It is described as the action of Maya—the action of Nature on man's life. It is Maya that has brought man to this world and set his senses at work. It is the Mother's touch that moves them ; otherwise they have no independent power of action.

Mother has given us a great thing as conscience, but She drops in a veil of mystery, which makes us forget our resolute and cherished purpose to know Truth.

Sages tell us that we can realise Truth in this very life. Though the world cannot give us permanent satisfaction, still here in this world by our acts and experiences we can go towards the goal of our life.

It is Mother that is the living principle in our life. Call Her as He, She or It, whatever you will ; it is Mother that guides our life. We are under Her care. She is the support of our life, hidden and secret. We talk of Her, but we do not know Her. She is in our every act—behind our every heart-beat. But why can't we know Her?

This life is not ours. There is no such thing as "we" or "ours." We falsely connect them with our life. "Our life"—"we"—no, everything is Mother! The living, working and guiding principle is Mother. There is no doubt about this. But still we cannot see Her. We get glimpses, but cannot see Her. Every being, every object and every action belongs to Mother ; still we are in ignorance.

When Mother has brought us here and is the support of our life, when She gives us occasional glimpses, may be one day she will favour us with a full Vision of Herself. She alone can give that. So only by ardent prayer we can get that. Our life is meant for that—for getting that Realisation. How can we pray so earnestly that She can no longer keep Herself away? We see Her actions and movements, but not Her. She is ever missing. To see Her would be to have great joy—to have divine ecstasy.

If we have genuine desire to realise Truth in this very life, every action of ours must correspond to that. We blame Mother, but we do not see the mystery of Mother's play. She has given us this body, will and power of choice. We must make a proper use of them, before we can expect to have Her. But, as a matter of fact, we misuse or abuse Her gifts, every moment of our life.

It is forgetfulness that keeps us back and is at the root of all evils. We cannot take advantage of the Mother's gifts, because we find it so hard to stick to our purpose and resolution. If we could only remember always what the duty of our life is, we could easily turn everyone of our actions to Mother's service and direct every bit of our energy to find Her. But that we cannot. We try a few days, then comes lethargy and we forget everything. The harder we try, the greater seem to be the attractions of the world to drag us down. So our determination slackens and we think all struggle is useless. Such thoughts rise so strongly in us and are so detrimental to the growth of our life! If we can only disentangle ourselves from the attachment to the world and the influence of our environments, we can devote our energies better to the service of the Mother. But there comes the false sense of duty and our mind grows weak. Various desires come and make us weaker. But we should struggle on and on to the last breath of our life and not give up the search. To do or die should be our motto. Mind grows weaker every day and the world becomes more and more unfavourable, but we should not mind

these. We must persevere till the very end. It is not a false, hopeless case we are engaged in. Mother is behind our every action, we are only to know this—we are to feel Her blessed touch. Mother is not unknowable—we must not think so. Has She not given us so many things? Will She not give us more, if we seek? Is it not She who has created in us the desire to know Her? Then we should sharpen and intensify that desire. We must not seek anything except Her.

But our life does not correspond to our purpose, and we blame Her. Our taste has been perverted by our parents, friends, guardians and teachers. We have been taught to love the world more than the Mother and we go far away from Her. But we can turn back. So many lives have been wasted, and it will take a long time to unlearn the superstition we have been taught and to renovate this life. But we can shorten that time by our intensity—intensity to know Truth and Mother. Everything will be to our advantage, if we only know how to avail ourselves of that. But we do not know what to do—what step to take. This is due to bad training and education we have received. We have to change the whole system. We must stand aloof, though the whole world tries to drag us to its old grooves. We must keep to our resolution and not play the coward.

The very same act can give us freedom or be the cause of our bondage. As soon as we turn our attention to the pleasures of the senses, our body, this lump of flesh, Mother is gone. Though She is behind everything, She is thus lost to our view. We thus lose Mother by our negligence. So let us forget everything else; let all our thoughts go to Mother! Let all our time and energy be devoted to Her; and we shall in no time get Her and know the mystery of Mother's play.

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## THE DILEMMA OF EGOISM.

Nothing puts a greater obstacle in the path of a religious aspirant and nothing is so difficult to give up as the spirit of egoism. Individualism has no place in the religious life—it must be engulfed in the personality of one's Guru, or break itself before the will of God. This state should not, however, be identified with passivity, as it generally means, indicating the want of a virile life within. If it be at all a passivity, it is highly to be coveted and very hard to obtain. It is a state of conscious self-surrender with a fully awakened mind to the will of the Guru or God, so that one may be shaped not in the way one chooses, but in the way desirable. But the spirit, here, is very likely to be mistaken. It is for this reason that Sri Krishna, while closing his teachings in the Song Celestial, suddenly says to his beloved friend, Arjuna—"I shall tell you a secret of all secrets—an invaluable thing, because I love you most dearly. Giving up all other paths, just take shelter in Me and Me alone; I shall save you from all sins—don't get afraid." Lest it should be misunderstood, the Lord immediately warns, "This is a saying which should never be told to one who is without due religious practices or devotion, and who has not served his Guru properly or who hates Me."

We find the same thing echoed in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, when he says in his inimitable language and novel method that when the "I-ness" or ego-consciousness will die, all troubles will be over and Truth will reveal itself. The great Sankaracharya in his famous work, "Vivekachudamani," devotes as many as thirteen verses to show the origin, growth and evils of ego-consciousness—how it hides our real nature by a shadow of darkness like a piece of cloud covering the blazing sun and becomes the root cause of the round of births and deaths and all the miseries that accrue in consequence. He says that chief of the obstacles in

the way of our self-realisation is the "ego." As long as this persists, there is not the least shadow of hope for our redemption. As the moon spreads forth its effulgence, when the eclipse is over, so the Truth that we are Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute will manifest with all its glory, when this ego dies. Further he says that it revives, though hundred times cut asunder, like the demons Jason had to fight with. If the least particle of it comes in contact with the mind-stuff it raises a veritable tempest within us like clouds overcasting the sky, when accompanied by strong winds. And so he cautions us that we can never too much safeguard ourselves against this eternal foe of all human beings.

If we look to Vedanta, we find a rational explanation for this. According to Vedanta, the whole universe is one Existence, and in that Ocean of Existence, we are like bubbles or waves. As the waves can never be distinguished from the waters of the ocean except through name and form, so we are not separate from that Infinite Existence, which in the language of Vedanta is called Brahman. Now, in our daily life, we always erroneously see the waves as distinguished from the ocean and feel miserable over what happens with the waves. When a wave breaks, it is not, in fact, destroyed—for the waters are there all the same; but when we identify ourselves with a wave, we are in constant terror, lest it should be destroyed. This process is going on through eternity, and under this magic influence of Maya, we laugh and dance, weep and cry, but very few of us find out the right track to analyse what constitutes the waves. Constantly we are trying to put a limitation on the ocean by a boundary line and our whole being is bent upon protecting it. But that is a thing absolutely impossible. How nicely has Swami Vivekananda put it—man is "an infinite dreamer seeing finite dreams!" "Life," according to him, "is the struggle of the Infinity to manifest itself through the finite." But when a man at last finds out that that is absurd, he recedes and then religion begins. Says the Upanishad—"As one fire takes

different forms according to the substances burnt, as air seems to have a variety of shapes according to the different objects it enters into, so one Soul residing within the whole universe, looks different according to the different objects, and it exists outside of them too. Now what is the cause of this differentiation? It is due to our ego. Worked by the ego, we are always trying to see ourselves separate from all others and the whole universe. There is no essential difference between a man and a man, for both are dwelt in by the same Self,—everyone admits this—but in the world, every two persons will always pull each other to be furthest off, by their different tendencies and inclinations. The world is thus full of an infinite number of hyperbolas which will never meet. But we forget that in God's kingdom, against all geometrical truths, all these hyperbolas have met at the Centre in Him, which we do not know. The search after religion means the search after this central point and naturally presupposes the destruction of our "ego." This is the reason why to a religious aspirant the "ego" is such a great dread. What unifies is religion, what separates is irreligion. Because "ego" separates, it must be rooted out, by all means.

From this, when we go to practice, we are faced with tremendous difficulties and highly conflicting ideas. If the ego be the cause of so much evil and at the same time the reason of self-assertion, whence shall come the stimulus to stifle this very ego. If the will of God rules the universe, where is the necessity for any effort?—then why should idleness be a crime and not raised to the pedestal of highest virtues—who will be responsible for our errors and mistakes—are we simply puppets in the hands of circumstances, with no strength to raise a feeble protest even? But, the history of mankind gives a verdict against this. All progress is the result of tremendous self-exertion. Nothing can be got without giving a price for it. Even the saints and sages had to pass through the fire of so many difficulties, before they realised their ideal. In practical life also we find the same thing.

Death can never be averted, as everybody knows. But can it be postponed? That is a great problem. When we administer a medicine, we are not sure, whether the doctor cures the patient or God does it. These problems are eternally troubling human minds, and no satisfactory solution is yet in sight.

The whole thing arises, perhaps, from the fact that we want to avoid struggle in life, which is impossible. When there is fair weather, we raise ourselves to the seat of God and deny Him altogether, and when there comes a change in our fortune, we in vain look for some invisible Power to come to our help and be responsible for our deeds. We refuse to be consistent throughout. We forget that the spirit of resignation and self-surrender demands a much greater amount of effort and will-power than the effervescent enthusiasm and feverish excitement which we call as free will. Ravana could rout even gods in the battlefield, but it was possible only for Sita to walk through the fire in the name of God and Truth. For us it will ever remain a problem, if that was true. True resignation can never be had without a tremendous amount of effort and heart-breaking struggle. Through rules, we go beyond rules; from crushing discipline, we get real freedom; passing through the stormy days of struggle and exertion, we get to a state when the breeze of Divine Grace will propel us safe ashore. Otherwise we can hardly form any idea as to what is meant by depending on God's will. When true dependence comes, they say, you will never make a false step: that is the test of it.

This problem of self-exertion and self-surrender has been very nicely and clearly solved by Sri Ramakrishna in the parable of the salt doll. A salt doll went to sound the depth of the ocean, and lo! in the middle, it found itself melted away. In the same way, when we exert with all our might to stifle the ego, during the process we ourselves lose our identity—"we" being merged in the Divine. Then our will is not at variance with the Divine will and self-surrender is not a task and brings in

no dread. Thus every time we make an effort for a good cause with the best of motives and having no selfish idea behind, we give one stroke at the root of the ego. For every good deed lifts us a step high towards God and every noble thought is but the reflection of God. Then who is responsible for the opposite and its consequences? None. It is the magic of Maya—it is the play of the Mother.

नादत्ते कस्यचित् पापं न चैव सुदृतं विभुः ।

अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥

—“God accepts neither merit nor demerit from anybody. Wisdom is clouded by ignorance and that deludes all beings.”

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA.

## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

### CHAPTER XVII.

उद्धव उवाच ।

कति तत्त्वानि विश्वेश संख्यातानृषिभिः प्रभो ॥

नवैकादशपञ्चत्रीण्यात्थ त्वमिह शुश्रुम ॥ १ ॥

Uddhava said :

1. How many<sup>1</sup> are the categories enumerated by the sages, O Lord of the Universe? O Lord, regarding this I hear that Thou speakest of twenty-eight, divided into nine, eleven, five and three.

[1 *How many* &c.—He means, which enumeration is correct?]

केचित्पट्विंशतिं प्राहुरपरे पञ्चविंशतिम् ॥

सप्तैके नव षट् केचिच्चत्वार्येकादशापरे ॥

केचित्सप्तदश प्राहुः षोडशैके त्रयोदश ॥ २ ॥

2. Some<sup>1</sup> speak of twenty-six, and others twenty-five; some speak of seven, some nine, or six, or four,



and others eleven; some speak of seventeen, or sixteen, and some, again, thirteen.

[1 *Some &c.*—These will be touched on later.]

एतावत्त्वं हि संख्यानामृषयो यद्विवक्षया ॥

गायन्ति पृथगायुष्मन्निदं नो वक्तुमर्हसि ॥ ३ ॥

3. Thou shouldst tell me, O Immortal One, the purpose which the sages have in view in thus differently enumerating them.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

युक्तं च सन्ति सर्वत्र भाषन्ते ब्राह्मणा यथा ॥

मायां मदीयामुदगृह्य वदतां किं नु दुर्घटम् ॥ ४ ॥

The Lord said :

4. Howsoever the sages may speak, it is quite in order, for all the categories are included<sup>1</sup> in every enumeration. And what is impossible<sup>2</sup> for those who speak accepting My wonder-working Maya?

[1 *Included*—tacitly or otherwise. The construction is highly elliptical.

2 *Impossible &c.*—When plurality itself is an illusion, one may easily indulge in any sort of speculation over it.]

नैतदेवं यथात्थ त्वं यदहं वच्मि तत्तथा ॥

एवं विवदतां हेतुं शक्तयो मे दुरत्ययाः ॥ ५ ॥

5. "It is not as you put it, but it is as I put it,"—this sort of fighting over the issue is due to My powers, Sattva,<sup>1</sup> Rajas and Tamas, which are so difficult to get rid of.

[1 *Sattva &c.*—transformed as particular mental states.]

यासां व्यतीकरादासीद्विकल्पो वदतां पदम् ॥

प्राप्ते शमदमेऽप्येति वादस्तमनु शाम्यति ॥ ६ ॥

6. It is the disturbance among these<sup>1</sup> that caused the doubt which is the ground of contention among the disputants. This doubt vanishes when one attains calm-

ness of mind and self-control, and after that dispute, too, is at an end.

[1 *These*—held in equilibrium in the Prakriti.

2 *Caused &c.*—evolved the entire universe of mind and matter, including, of course, doubt.]

परस्परानुप्रवेशात्तत्त्वानां पुरुषर्षभ ॥

पौर्वापर्यप्रसंख्यानं यथा वक्तुं विवक्षितम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. O best of men, it is owing to their mutual interpenetration<sup>1</sup> that the categories are enumerated in a relation of cause and effect, according to the view of the particular exponent.

[1 *Interpenetration*—to be explained in the next verse.]

एकस्मिन्नपि दृश्यन्ते प्रविष्टानीतराणि च ॥

पूर्वस्मिन्वा परस्मिन्वा तत्त्वे तत्त्वानि सर्वशः ॥ ८ ॥

8. In the same category, be it cause or effect, all the other categories are seen to be included.<sup>1</sup>

[1 *Included*—The effects (the jar, etc.) are inherent in a subtle form in the cause (the clay), which, again, runs through the effects.]

पौर्वापर्यमतोऽभीष्टां प्रसंख्यानमभीप्सताम् ॥

यथा विविक्तं यद्वक्तुं गृहीमो युक्तिसंभवात् ॥ ९ ॥

9. Therefore we accept as true the causal order and enumeration of the categories upheld by the different exponents, just as<sup>1</sup> their mouth utters them,—for there is reason behind them all.

[1 *Just as &c.*—The construction is again elliptical.]

अनाद्यविद्यायुक्तस्य पुरुषस्यात्मवेदनम् ॥

स्वतो न संभवादन्यस्तत्त्वज्ञो ज्ञानदो भवेत् ॥ १० ॥

10. Some<sup>1</sup> hold: Since a man, under the grip of beginningless nescience, cannot realise his Self unaided, the Omniscient Giver of knowledge must be a different Being from him.

[Verses 10 and 11 show how, apart from the categories among which a causal relation subsists, and which, therefore, can be

grouped variously, the question of identity or difference between God and the soul leads to two schools.

<sup>1</sup> Some—the upholders of twenty-six categories.]

**पुरुषेश्वरयोरेत्र न वैलक्षण्यमण्वपि ॥**

**तदन्यकल्पनापार्था ज्ञानं च प्रकृतेर्गुणः ॥ ११ ॥**

11. On this point others<sup>1</sup> hold: There is not<sup>2</sup> the least difference between the soul and God. Therefore it is futile to make a distinction between them. And knowledge<sup>3</sup> is but an attribute<sup>4</sup> of the Prakriti.

[<sup>1</sup> Others—those who are for twenty-five categories.

<sup>2</sup> Not &c.—Since both are Knowledge Absolute.

<sup>3</sup> Knowledge &c.—It cannot form a separate category to vitiate both the above enumerations.

<sup>4</sup> Attribute &c.—being the function of Sattva.]

**प्रकृतिर्गुणसाम्यं वै प्रकृतेर्नात्मनो गुणाः ॥**

**सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति स्थित्युत्पत्त्यन्तहेतवः ॥ १२ ॥**

12. The Prakriti is but the equilibrium of the Gunas, which are Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These, leading respectively to the maintenance, origin and destruction of the world, belong to the Prakriti, and not to the Atman.

**सत्त्वं ज्ञानं रजः कर्म तमोऽज्ञानमिहोच्यते ॥**

**गुणव्यतिकरः कालः स्वभावः सूत्रमेव च ॥ १३ ॥**

13. Now, knowledge<sup>1</sup> is said to be the outcome of Sattva, activity, of Rajas, and ignorance, of Tamas. Time<sup>2</sup> is no other than God who causes the disturbance among the Gunas, and tendency is identical with the Cosmic Prana.<sup>3</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> Knowledge &c.—So all these must, according to this school come under the Prakriti.

<sup>2</sup> Time &c.—So neither it nor 'tendency' (the resultant impressions of work) can form separate categories.

<sup>3</sup> Cosmic Prana—the same as Cosmic Intelligence or Mahat.]

**पुरुषः प्रकृतिर्व्यक्तमहंकारो नभोऽनिलः ॥**

**ज्योतिरापः क्षितिरिति तत्त्वान्युक्तानि मे नव ॥ १४ ॥**

14. Purusha, Prakriti, Mahat, Egoism, ether, air,

fire, water and earth—these are the nine categories enumerated by Me.

[The Lord enumerates the three Gunas apart from the Prakriti, because they come and go. He now proceeds to enumerate in verses 14—16 the other twenty-five categories which are common to both the schools referred to in verses 10 and 11.]

**श्रोत्रं त्वग्दर्शनं घ्राणो जिह्वेति ज्ञानशक्तयः ॥**

**वाक्पान्युपस्थपाय्वह्निः कर्मान्यङ्गोभयं मनः ॥ १५ ॥**

15. My friend, the ear, skin, eye, nose and palate are the five organs of knowledge; the tongue, hand, leg, etc., are the organs of action; and the mind is both.<sup>1</sup>

[1 Both—organ of knowledge and action. These are the eleven categories referred to in verse 1.]

**शब्दः स्पर्शो रसो गन्धो रूपं चेत्यर्थजातयः ॥**

**गत्युक्त्वात्सर्गशिल्पानि कर्मायतनसिद्धयः ॥ १६ ॥**

16. Sound, touch, taste, smell and colour are the five sense-objects. Motion, speech, excretion and manual art are but the effects<sup>1</sup> of the organs of action.

[1 Effects &c.—hence not to be enumerated separately.]

(To be continued.)

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

TORCH-BEARER.—By T. L. Vaswani. Published by the Arya Samaj, Karachi. Pp. 192. Price, Re. 1-8.

The book was written as a centenary offering to the sacred memory of the Swami Dayananda, the famous founder of the Arya Samaj. In it the author records some of his reflections on the life of Dayananda and the Aryan Ideal which he upheld. A burning spirit of renunciation, passionate love for truth, snow-white purity of life and deep veneration for the Aryan Ideal—these were the qualities in the personality of Swami Dayananda, which attracted the author to the saint, and in the book he exhorts all to try to incorporate those virtues in life.

Though we differ from some of the views held and preached by the Swami, his life is surely full of inspiration for all struggling for a higher ideal, and as such the present volume throwing sidelights on the life of the Swami will be welcomed by many.

YOGA-MIMANSA, Vol. I. No. 2.—By Srimat Kuvalayananda.  
Published by Kaivalyadhama, Lonavla, Bombay.

This quarterly magazine is published to record the result of research done on a scientific basis in the realm of Yoga-philosophy. The experiences of a Yogic life have never been subjected to scientific experimentation, and for the first time an attempt has been made in that direction from the Ashrama founded by the Swami. In the volume before us are given various poses with copious illustrating pictures, which may cure many chronic diseases. This is properly the province of Hatha-Yoga—a science which has got a bad reputation as encouraging only mystery and miracle mongering. The author's scientific treatment of the subject will clear all prejudices from the public mind and enable people to test it for themselves. We wish success to this altogether new enterprise.

LOFTY THOUGHTS FOR LONELY MOMENTS.—Published by Messrs. A. B. Sons & Co., 2 & 3, Lall Bazar Street, Calcutta. Pp. 365. Price, Re. 1.

The booklet containing 365 beautiful quotations from various authors in English will serve as a stimulating reading in the lonely hours of life.

THE IDEAL OF EDUCATION.—By Swami Abhedananda.  
Published by the Behar Young Men's Institute.

The pamphlet contains a very learned and thoughtful speech delivered by the Swami at the 'Behar Young Men's Institute,' Patna, in which after comparing the past and present systems of education in India with those of the West he brings out what should be the aim and method of education.

## BENGALI.

BHAGAVAT PRASANGA.—By Basantakumar Chattopadhyay, M.A. To be had of the author, 152, Harish Mukherjee Road, Bhowanipur, Calcutta. Pp. 227. Price, Re. 1-4.

The book contains eighteen articles originally contributed to various Bengali magazines. In these, the learned author has dealt with the abstruse points of Hindu religion and philosophy in such a fascinating way that even a layman likely to be frightened by the very name of metaphysics is sure to get much interest. The writer has a very clear grasp of what he has to say, and very often as he seems to be speaking from the heart the book has got an added charm. The subjects chosen are such as will prove of great interest to all—viz., "Theory of Creation"; "Life after Death"; "Theory of Incarnation"; "Paths of Knowledge," etc. At a time when the country is flooded with novels—not unoften of an objectionable type, we heartily welcome this volume.

## NEWS AND NOTES.

## RELIGION IN TERROR.

When religion is not based on firm faith in God and a deep love of humanity, it runs the risk of life at every puff of wind. And contrary to all laws of the material world, in matters spiritual, when we are at a loss to know how to save ourselves, we become all the more eager to save others. This is the root cause of all bigotry and persecution that has appeared in the history of the world from time to time. When a man is intensely religious, he has no time to fight with others for creeds and dogmas. Religion is a matter between him and his Maker, and the more he goes towards God, the greater is the peace and lustre he spreads around. All people fly to him to get solace of life and to soothe their lacerated heart—

not that he has to seek converts. But otherwise is the case, when we trade in false religion. When a religion loses its real significance, it very often tries to live under the shadow or even protection of temporal power. So it is we find that the state sometimes serves as the handmaid of religion in the oppression of humanity. During the Inquisition period of European history as many as 3,400,000 persons were executed, according to one authority, because they did not or were supposed not to believe in all that has been said in the Bible. For a long time in Europe religion tried to stop all progress of science, lest it should make the people heretic. The latest instance of what extremes religious bigotry can go to even under the blaze of modern civilisation is supplied from Tennessee, an American state, where a schoolmaster has been prosecuted for teaching the doctrine of evolution to his pupils. The state fears, young boys will grow up with disrespect for the Bible, if this and some other doctrines of modern science which directly go against the teachings of the scripture are taught them. For, the Biblical story of the origin of man and the rising of the dead on the Judgment Day is denied by modern biology; physics finds out that the sun's rays reflected on clouds form a rainbow, whereas the Bible says that God made the rainbow and promised Noah that no flood should kill again all life; modern astronomy contradicts the teachings of the Bible that the earth was created four days before the sun, and modern philological research goes against the theory that various languages were created on earth from the time when God confounded man's speech in the tower of Babel.

Those who want to build their religious life on these exploded theories only, may do so by all means. But we believe, a man may grow in religion in spite of them. By sincerely following the teachings of Christ, a man may become a saint; whereas fighting for the authenticity of every statement in the Bible, a man may go daily further off from God. This is so true of every religion.

## ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY.

It would be deemed a truism to state that so long as the pursuit of wealth for its own sake looms large before the eyes of the people to the exclusion of all other considerations and duties of life, the hope for any permanent peace in the world is foredoomed to failure. So long as the mere possession of wealth entitles the possessor to comfort, esteem and honour, few care to stop to inquire the legitimacy or otherwise of the means employed in the acquisition.

Mr. Bertrand Russell in a reported interview has given expression to some rather unpleasant truths. We shall here leave out of consideration his observations with regard to the dealings of the white empires in their relations with coloured subjects; and they are well worth pondering over by statesmen entrusted with responsibility in the matter. He believes that the future peace of the world depends upon the solution of differences in civilisation and the elimination of exploitation for private profit.

He says—"If we would reduce our standard of luxury and simplify enormously the number of 'things' that clutter our existence and exhaust the world with useless activity, the white explorer would withdraw from much of the imperial territory, and the peoples with different civilisations would be left in comparative independence. (Personally I think, for example, it may be a great blessing to the human race, when the supply of oil is exhausted!)

"But this is Utopian. Our practical problem is, first, to eliminate exploitation of raw materials for private profit and, then, to work out the best possible plan of co-operation among different racial groups. The two phases of the problem may be attacked simultaneously, but we must always remember that political democracy is only one part of the whole, and far less important than economic democracy in its bearing on human happiness and even on justice. So long as the shareholders draw



the profits while others do the work, genuine democracy is impossible."

Mr. Russell believes that by the elimination of private profit and the international control of raw materials something like permanent peace can be hoped for the world.

The problem is as old as the ages. It is only by the removal of privilege of every kind that permanent peace can be secured. And we think that the teachings of the Vedanta contain the best solution for the problem. With remarkable insight into the future the Swami Vivekananda pointed out years ago—"This practical side of the Vedanta morality is necessary as much to-day as it ever was ; more necessary, perhaps, than it ever was, for all this privilege-claiming has become tremendously intensified with the extension of knowledge. The idea of God and the devil, or Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, has a good deal of poetry in it. The difference between God and the devil is in nothing except in unselfishness and selfishness. The devil knows as much as God, is as powerful as God, only he has no holiness—that makes him a devil. Apply the same idea to the modern world : excess of knowledge and power, without holiness, makes human beings devils. Tremendous power is being acquired by the manufacture of machines and other appliances, and privilege is claimed to-day as it never has been claimed in the history of the world. That is why the Vedanta wants to preach against it, to break down this tyrannising over the souls of men."

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# Prabuddha Bharata

उन्निष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

*4th January, 1921.*

In connection with a noted person the Swami observed: "What will mere words do if there is no character behind them? That is the great stumbling-block for all. Sri Ramakrishna would say, 'Almost all have been caught in the snare of sex-attraction. Only a few have been saved from it by the Divine Mother.' It is a most dreadful attachment. People are all right so long as they have not come under its influence. A man under its spell can stoop to anything."

He quoted a Hindi couplet describing the baneful influences of money, sex-attraction and the palate, and added: "'Lust and gold,' and 'the palate and sex-impulse' are short expressions for the same thing. If one gives up these enjoyments, one verily renounces the world. One who can do this sets at naught the whole world indeed."

*6th January.*

"The world," said the Swami, "is a dreadful place. Only falsehood reigns here. For a Sadhu truth is everything. If he gives up truth, he can no more prosper. Little untruths are also untruths."

*8th January.*

Referring to somebody's deficient regard for truth the Swami said: "Truth is God. Falsehood is Maya. One gets everything by holding on to truth. Sri Ramakrishna taunted Pandit Shivanath Sastri with the words. 'You are all so sane people, but how can you speak an untruth? You call me insane, but never does an untruth escape my lips!' Wishing to keep the incident of the Kalighat priest's kicking him a secret, he asked Hriday Mukherji to elicit from him a promise not to mention it to anybody. Hriday at first objected. But Sri Ramakrishna made him elicit the promise from him three times, and remarked, 'Now it will never escape my lips.' For the good of the priest he thus put himself under a vow to observe silence on the matter.

"He once made an engagement with Sj. Jadu Mallik to meet him in his garden at noon. But he forgot about it, being engrossed in conversation with a number of visitors. At 11 P.M., when he was about to retire for the night, he suddenly remembered it. Immediately he had a lantern lighted, and accompanied by Rakhai Maharaj, went to the garden. Finding the gate closed, he put one foot in and shouted, 'Here I have come.'

"He observed the same steadfastness to truth with regard to food also. He had given up all, but could not give up truth.

"It is a tremendous ordeal to abide by truth. A good deal of sacrifice is needed. To keep something secret—saying, 'I won't tell it,'—is also a kind of untruth. To be absolutely frank and open in one's dealings is real truthfulness."

This last remark the Swami made to a celebrated Bengali novelist who had said he was greatly devoted to

truth. The Swami cautioned him to reflect a little before he made that statement.

The Swami continued: "How dreadful is this realm of Maya! What stormy billows on it! One can watch it calmly if only one succeeds in removing oneself from it. Non-attachment. Otherwise there is a great danger. But it is a tremendously difficult task to remove oneself from it."

To-day the Durga-Saptasati will be read to him. He recited a verse or two of it, with the remark that the descriptions of battles, etc., have to be read quickly, and hymns, etc., slowly. He recited, with great sweetness, the stanza beginning with, 'O Durga, thou removest the fears of all creatures who remember Thee,' etc., and remarked, "How beautiful!"

Then he said: "Only during the last Puja did I miss reciting the Saptasati. I had an ulcer in my hand, and recitation is forbidden on an occasion like this. For a moment I thought that as this was a question, not of formal work, but of one's natural devotion, I might as well go through it. But physical weakness prevented it. Before this I do not remember to have ever missed the recitation during the Navaratri days. It is all His will!"

He had the Patanjali Yoga-Sutras brought, and read out the commentary on the aphorism: 'Works are neither black nor white for the Yogis; for others they are threefold—black, white and mixed.' (IV. 7)—The gist of the explanation is that no blame attaches to the aspirant because he is selfless.

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## OCCASIONAL NOTES.

One of the most hopeful signs which give strength and enthusiasm to a social worker is the universal interest that is being evinced in the question of village reconstruction. It is not that we are any way nearer now to a satisfactory solution of the problem than before. Responsible politicians and leaders have only begun to talk about the need for the organisation of the village. Nevertheless, their time and energy is still devoted to politics, the most exciting and spectacular of all games in which the poor and illiterate masses of the villages are entirely ignored, except during the election campaigns. What little change has been effected in our habitual indifference towards our humble village brethren has not so far taken any permanent and well-organised shape, and unless the best minds of the country set themselves to this task in order to devise ways and means of rural reconstruction, the new-born enthusiasm may flicker away. The importance and urgency of this task can be easily realised if it is remembered that, in the peculiar circumstances in which India is placed, all hopes of establishing a national and popular government should remain a vain dream until the former is freed from the numerous shackles that are so heavily pulling her down. Three-fourths of her population depend upon agriculture, and as much as 95% of the people live in the villages. It is plain as daylight that the salvation of the country is inseparably bound up with the efficiency and welfare of the villages.



It might be taken for granted that there is a perfect unanimity among all sections of people about the need for reorganising the rapidly decaying village institutions. Apart from the activities of the Christian and other missionary bodies which are more or less confined to cities and towns, attempts that have so far been made in

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this direction are initiated under the auspices of one or two progressive political parties. Naturally enough, owing to the peculiarly unfortunate and unnatural political conditions in which our country is placed, the movements initiated by one party, however unobjectionable they might be, fail to secure the support and sympathy of the rival parties. If one studies the somewhat chequered career of the Khaddar Movement, our meaning would become clear. In the beginning of the Movement, Khaddar was considered to be a symbol of non-co-operation, and as such the loyalists and others scrupulously kept themselves away from it. And even at the present day purely economic aspects of the question do not receive adequate consideration for the simple reason that the Movement is carried on by the Congress. In the light of this experience, we are led to believe that if the problem of rural reconstruction is to be undertaken in a calm and dispassionate spirit, it should be organised not only on purely non-party lines, but should also be rigorously kept outside the range of politics. Not that we believe that politics, social economics and similar other concerns of the nation are so many water-tight compartments, but if this question is turned into a plank in the programme of the political parties, the co-operation and good-will that are essential for the success of any scheme of village reform would be found wanting.

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The existence of differences among the various political parties of our country is not the only difficulty that has to be overcome. The unfortunate communal and caste misunderstandings and quarrels only help to make the situation more delicate. Moreover, the work of the regeneration of villages has to be carried on in so many different directions that unless the state with its immense resources comes to help in a whole-hearted way, it is not possible to make substantial progress as rapidly as we would wish. As this possibility is so very remote, we must content ourselves with what little can be done

by self-help. With regard to such matters as the spread of primary education, the improvement of sanitation and the development of agriculture and cottage and home industries, the scope of popular action independent of government aid is very limited. While it is the duty of the politicians to devise the best means of pressing these upon the attention of the government and induce them to move in the matter in right earnest, we shall simply attempt to indicate a few of the many directions in which social workers can help to arrest the decay of our villages.



We are not of those who always dwell upon the glories of the past and pine for what is not to come. Nevertheless, we consider it necessary to make a passing reference to some of the most essential features of our ancient culture mainly with a view to place before one's mind the spirit and genius of the ancient village communities. By doing so, we shall be able to lay the foundation of reconstruction on a secure and permanent footing, and the subsequent evolution would proceed on a perfectly natural line. From the very beginning of civilisation, India has been predominantly rural, and even at the present day it has very few cities, while the number of villages is as high as seven hundred thousands. Every student of Indian history is familiar with the researches of Sir Henry Maine who has proved that the Indian village life had so much vitality and so much character that it has persisted, through thousands of years. Sir Henry describes those villages as 'little republics,' and these satisfied all the requirements of a civilised society, such as their own system of education, Panchayets or arbitration boards, rural sanitation and so on. The social and economic scheme of the village life was built upon mutual love and co-operation, and the communal spirit developed to such a remarkable extent that competition, rivalry and selfishness which characterise the modern society were altogether unknown. Very often individual interests were readily and unquestionably sacrificed to the

interests of the community at large. The evils of private property were least prominent, and many things contributing to common welfare such as pathways, tanks and water-sources, pasture-lands etc., were held in common. In a word, the people were most happy and had few wants, which were supplied by their own exertions.

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Partly by natural causes and partly by wilful and violent methods, the ancient fabric has been destroyed. The part played by the old East Indian Company in running the native arts and crafts need not be dwelt upon here. If to-day one finds that abject poverty, idleness and disease have made the villages their permanent home, it is due mostly to the destruction of the indigenous village economic life. In the wake of the political subjection of the country to a predominantly commercial nation, India began to be flooded with all sorts of cheap machine-made goods from various foreign countries. Cities, towns and industrial centres grew up, attracting large numbers of people from the rural areas and thus dealt a serious blow to the already disorganised communal life of the villages. The centralised form of government acting like a soulless machine through a hierarchy of permanent officials killed what little initiative and responsibility the villages enjoyed. Everyone who is familiar with the present life of the villages will bear testimony to the fact that the very people who a few generations ago managed every detail of administration in their areas absolutely by themselves are now reduced to such utter helplessness that they seek the aid of government officials for everything from domestic quarrels to the repair of village roads.

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It will be seen from the foregoing reasons that the problem of the reconstruction of our villages is beset with difficulties, and even if we succeed in overcoming these, for obvious reasons, it is impossible to expect the exact past restored. All that we can hope for is to remove the



serious disadvantages that clog the life of the villages by reforms and agencies calculated to bring out local talent, initiative and co-operation. First in importance in this direction come measures that would mitigate the poverty of the people. This poverty again has a negative aspect, namely the indebtedness of the peasantry. Some success has, of course, been achieved in this line by the spread of co-operative credit societies. But it must be said that except in urban areas these have not touched the poor landless labourers. The sooner the poor people are brought within the reach of the co-operative societies, the smoother will be the paths of the social workers in the villages. Even the provision of cheap and easy credit will not by itself raise the economic status of the poor villagers. Unless the peasants freed from their heavy burden of debts are taught and provided with suitable means of increasing their income as well as employing their leisure hours in profitable occupation there is every likelihood of their reverting to their original indebtedness. In this connection, the disinterested efforts made by the leaders to universalise hand-spinning and hand-weaving deserve the whole-hearted support of our countrymen, irrespective of politics, race and creed. Although cloth, coming next in importance to food, occupies a supreme position in the scale of national industries and specially in rural economics, we believe a systematic effort should be made to develop *all forms* of home and cottage industries.

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The towns, on account of numerous opportunities for enjoyment of all kinds and the possibilities for the free play of individual ambition and talent, draw the bold and the adventurous from the villages. Consequently, superstitions, orthodoxy, conservatism, reactionism, ignorance, prejudice and faction find a convenient shelter in rural areas. Unscrupulous men, too, are not wanting to take advantages of the weaknesses of the villagers. It has already been indicated that villages are the real backbone

of our national life, and so long as progress in education, social reform and political consciousness is more or less confined to cities and towns, it will be impossible for India to fulfil her mission in life. The remedy can be found only in men of culture and character, settling in villages with a disinterested motive to serve. The lines along which these people will have to work their way will differ with the varying circumstances, and it will by no means be a difficult matter for the worker on the spot to decide for himself in what way his energies should be most advantageously applied. We have already indicated the need for effecting improvements in the deplorable economic condition of the peasants by devising ways and means for lightening the burden of their debts and providing supplementary sources of earning. The co-operative movement and home industries would naturally occur to one's mind in this connection. These by themselves are not sufficient. Bound down by the conventions of caste and orthodoxy the villager, poor though he is, is notorious for his extravagance on occasions like marriage, funerals, special festivals etc., even to the extent of running into debts. The spread of a knowledge of the essentials of religion and spiritual life and the example of practical social reform by men of culture and high social status can alone reduce the mischief of such evils. Next to this extravagance, comes the proneness of the villager for litigation. With the disappearance of the old ties of communal life and the patriarchal influence of the wise elders, this tendency of litigation has become so wide-spread that it will tax to the utmost the best energies of the social workers to check it. Panchayets and arbitration boards are the most natural agencies to think of, but the success of these again depend upon securing men of incorruptible character and unselfishness—men who would always work as the servants of the people.

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It may strike the readers as very strange that we have not insisted upon the need for the spread of education in

the villages. It is not that we are not alive to the fact that education alone is the most powerful lever to raise the status of any people. The village reformer, to the extent he is able to instil the spirit of thrift, co-operation, arbitration and economic self-help, will be spreading a form of man-making education in the sphere of his work. Besides the organisation of primary day-schools for boys and girls, wherever circumstances permit, the opening of night schools for wage-earners teaching by magic lanterns and other forms of visual instruction, the starting of circulating libraries and similar methods will have to be undertaken.



The difficulties which a village reformer has to overcome are for obvious reasons many and formidable, especially in initial stages. We cannot think of any better and surer road to success than to walk along the lines which Mahatma Gandhi indicated in the course of an address delivered at the Y. M. C. A., Calcutta. He rightly pointed out—"If the young men went to the village with character they would find out for themselves the possibilities. Let them go to the villages with character which must be expressed not through speeches but through loving acts, and it would be found the villagers would instinctively understand them and respond to their call" He appealed to the social workers and said—"Go to them in a spirit of love and not as dictators, and you will find that the villagers will nobly respond to your call"

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# THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT.

BY SWAMI ADWAITANANDA.

## I

The soul of the Indian nation is awake. We find that a giant power is slowly but surely preparing to face a new world, a strange and foreign environment. We see on every side an earnest endeavour to fray all bonds. The whole movement is as yet in the stage of transition, but there can be no gainsaying the fact that this renaissance will ultimately tear asunder all bonds and will find expression in a richly varied spiritual, ethical, intellectual, emotional, vital and material efflorescence.

In order to have a clear perspective of the trend of this ascending movement, it is necessary that we should have a lucid conception of the past of India with its cultural peculiarities. We must also be conversant with the causes of her decline, the immediate effect of the onslaught of an alien civilisation and the different stages of the upward curve which has quite recently begun.

Western writers who have studied the Indian civilisation in a perfunctory way generally uphold the view that the Indian mind is abstract, other-worldly, overpowered by the sense of the Infinite, unfit to face and master the life-movement, and unpractical. This is a one-sided view. Spirituality is undoubtedly the master-key of Indian mentality. The sense of the Infinite is native to it. The Indian mind intuitively realised that the material cannot be grasped until it stands in right relation to the spiritual. She further saw that sensational experiences and human reason were insufficient instruments for probing the innermost secrets of this vast and complex phenomenon. The invisible always surrounds the visible, the supra-sensible the sensible. She found out that man has the power to transcend all material limitations, to come face to face with Truth and to acquire mastery over the whole of

nature. She carefully thought out the ways and means, and with unparalleled courage and calm audacity she underwent mental and physical Tapasya to realise the goal. Long periods of such rigorous discipline, shining examples of God-intoxicated men and age-long traditions have given to the Indian mind its peculiar religious and metaphysical bent.

However, this was not her whole mentality. When we read the ancient literature of India, we find that her activities have been many-sided. She has created varied systems of philosophy, cosmogony and subjective sciences. She had different kinds of religious orders embodying different ideals, varied systems of Yoga, physical sciences, worldly trades, industries, and fine arts. She had systems of politics, republics, empires, kingdoms. She had, further, the spirit of expansion. Her religions spread over Japan and China and westward as far as Palestine and Alexandria. The traces of her culture are found in Mesopotamia. Her vast literature embraces the whole of life-religion, philosophy, Yoga, logic, rhetoric, grammar, poetry, drama, fiction, politics, sociology, medicine, astronomy, painting, sculpture, architecture, dancing, in short, all the arts and sciences which could be useful to the mind or the body of humanity. An innate and dominant spirituality, an unexampled vital creativeness, a keen, powerful and penetrating intellect, and an indomitable will which defied even death were the characteristics of ancient India. The age of the spirit—the Vedas and the Upanishads, was followed by centuries of heroic action and social construction. And this great classical age was marked by an insatiable thirst for detailed refinement in science, art and scholarship. The spiritual background was always there, because the thoughtful Indian mind never lost sight of the goal. The post-classical period saw completion of the cycle. Even the sensuous, emotional and æsthetic tendencies of man were brought into the service of the spiritual. This is the inner meaning and sense of the Pauranic and Tantric systems and the religion of Bhakti.

The law of cycles which is operative everywhere in this world of name and form overtook the Indian nation at this stage. There was a cessation of free and unhampered intellectual activity, a slumber of the scientific mind, a weakening of will and a stoppage of intuitive creation. There was a fading of the joy of creation along with a spirit of passivity, a keen desire to escape from the ills of life instead of a manly endeavour to master them, a blind attachment to the external forms of things, an unpardonable obedience to the dictates of authority and an utter lack of the spirit of individualism and intrepid thinking. The essential spirit of Indian culture, however, remained. Even in the period of her decline she produced personalities of remarkable mental and physical vigour, but when compared with the past the decadence was marked. It was this state of helplessness which gave the European adventurer his chance

The impact of this alien pressure brought forth, as was inevitable, a reaction. At the outset it was imitative. But it revived the dormant Indian mind, critical and creative. It created an earnest desire for emancipation and self-expression. This new impulse necessitated the turning of a new eye upon its past culture, a thorough sifting of the essentials and the non-essentials, an intellectual effort to re-apply old principles to new environments and the cultivation of the strength of mind to master and assimilate them. This commingling of the two rivers of thought, Eastern and Western, and the physical subjection of her peoples which was sapping her vitality and leading to her economic ruin, have been instrumental in bringing about a movement of rebirth. The Indian mind has now before it the supreme task of recovering her old spiritual experiences, of expressing them in new and varied forms of philosophy, art, science and literature, and of applying them with unflinching intrepidity to the problems of her external life—political, social and economic. This is the special mission which India has to fulfil. She of all countries has been charged with the solution of this complicated problem, because she has the

master key in her hands, and inspite of ups and downs never lost sight of Truth. This loyalty to Truth has made her a chosen nation in the eyes of the gods. She is to set an example to the whole world and to demonstrate the possibility of harmonising a bewildering variety on the basis of an underlying unity. This is the significance of the Indian national movement.

It is asserted that nations and systems of culture fulfil special functions as organs of humanity, as individuals fulfil special uses in the community. In that case within the bounds of India is the focal or polar points of the race. The great task of reconciling the opposites would devolve upon her. It seems to have been decreed by Providence that Aryans, Dravidians, Mussalmans, Christians and Parsis should meet in this sacred land and learn their mutual significance and responsibilities. India is to find herself to be not merely a congeries of warring fragments, a battle-ground of rival political factions held in a mechanical combination by the pressure of a benevolent foreign element, but a single immense organism filled into the tide of one strong pulsating life from one end to the other.

It is extremely difficult to foresee the nature of the shape the new creative impulse will assume, but we can safely assert that the spiritual motive in India will be the governing strain. It is indeed significant that almost all great movements of life in this country have drawn their inspiration from religion and spirituality. The onslaught of the Western intellectual and rationalistic culture resulted in the creation of new religions. The Brahmo Samaj in Bengal, started with an attempt to restate the Vedanta and though protestant, followed the curve of the national mind. The Arya Samaj in the Punjab based itself on a fresh interpretation of the Vedas and made a fresh attempt to apply the old Vedantic principles to the changed conditions of modern life. The movement associated with the great names of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda took up all the scattered threads of the past and combined them in a harmonious whole. It reaffirmed the old

monasticism, but by a process of judicious assimilation it gave it an aggressive and a social turn. The rest of India have felt the influence of these movements, and all religious sects and disciplines are becoming strongly revived, active and dynamic. Islam is also showing signs of reawakening, and endeavours are being made to vitalise the old Islamic ideals. These signs clearly indicate that there is a tendency towards the return of the spirit upon life, everywhere. The writings of Sir John Woodroffe who has evinced such a keen interest in Indian religious and philosophical literature have brought to light the hidden gems in Tantric literature and have been instrumental in dissipating many false notions. They have clearly shown that Ancient India did not reject life but embraced it with a mastering fold. The erudite writings of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh on philosophical and psychological subjects have opened up a new path and upon past foundations have reared up a superb superstructure. His writings clearly indicate that the Indian mind is capable of sublime creative activity once it has been placed in a free atmosphere.

In subjective sciences and in poetry, literature and art also there have been definite beginnings. India is now producing works of art with a distinct message. They display clearly the national individuality and the distinctive national bent. But in the external life of the nation no such originality is as yet visible. There is an attempt to imitate the West blindly in matters political, and although here and there we find some illuminating idea it cannot be said that the national mind has assumed a coherent form in respect of it. Partly this is due to the hampering political conditions. The Indian mind, probably, is engaged in finding out ways and means of removing the existing disabilities first. When the time of political reconstruction comes it will apply itself to the task with absolute freedom from the notions borrowed from the West and will evolve a polity suitable to her national genius and environments. Of course, the cry is persistent that existing forms and methods of administra-



tion are entirely unsuitable to Indian conditions. They require a thorough overhauling, and this is the root cause of the intense struggle that is being waged on the plane political. Indian society is in a still more confused stage. Old forms and institutions are crumbling under the irresistible pressure of new environments, but owing to an inertia of thought and lack of strength of will no clear methods of social advance and social adjustment are laid out.

*(To be continued.)*

## INDIAN WOMANHOOD IN THE ACCOUNTS OF GREEK WRITERS.\*

BY HARIPADA GHOSAL, Vidyabenode, M.A., M.R.A.S.

Those of the Western scholars who make capital of Hellenic influence on India should remember that though architecture, sculpture, painting and coinage had felt the influence of Greek culture, it may be said that foreigners had very little opportunity to study the social condition of an ancient and highly civilised people like the Indians scattered over this continent. Alexander's campaign overwhelmed India like a storm, but like a storm it passed away after only a transient stay. Macedonian authority was swept away as early as 322 B.C., and Indian princes asserted their independence and exterminated the last vestiges of a foreign domination.

The accounts of Greek travellers and writers about the social condition of the Indian people are not trustworthy, as they knew India only imperfectly, and their information is scrappy and defective. Failing to have a first-hand knowledge, many of these men depended upon hearsay and depicted India and the customs prevailing at that time, as suited their purpose. Negligible though they appear, they shed faint rays on the otherwise obscure nature of those times and are of some value in tracing the

\* The picture of Indian womanhood depicted in the article is more than we know.—*Editor, P.B.*

gradual progress of the thoughts and ideas of the Indian people. But we should be wary and cautious in gleanings facts which are sometimes so absurd, alien and repugnant to the Indian temperament that we should reject them as worthless stuff. We endorse the views of Dr. G. N. Banerjee: "Neither did the Assyrians, Arabs, nor Phoenecians reach the true centres of Hindu civilisation. They merely touched the fringe of Indian culture by frequenting those sea-board towns, where the mixed population was more occupied with commerce than with intellectual pursuits. The conquerors, previous to Alexander the great, did no more than reach the gates of India and reconnoitre its approaches, while Alexander himself failed to penetrate beyond its vestibule." (*Hellenism in Ancient India: Intro. p. 2.*)

This also may be said to be true of many of the Greek writers who marked certain customs and usages in some tribes and semi-barbarous people and supposed them to be of the Hindu people. The only thing which is reliable and hence can be depended upon is the writing of Megasthenes who lived in the court of Chandragupta between 302 and 288 B.C., but his original book is lost. Subsequent writers quoted from it so often that we can get a glimpse into the subject-matter and the manner of his writing. Before him Strabbo, Pliny and Arian wrote about India, but they derived their materials from the accounts of writers who accompanied Alexander during his Indian expedition. However trustworthy may be these writers about the civil and military administration of Chandragupta's court, yet with the single exception of perhaps Megasthenes, we cannot accept their conclusions as reliable with regard to the social customs and usages of the Indian population. Again, Megasthenes himself admits that he had no personal and first-hand knowledge of the people of the lower Gangetic plain, and that he had taken down their accounts from hearsay and rumour which have very little historical value as such.

We know the exalted position women held in the Buddhist India as well as their important relationship in

social and civic affairs. Megasthenes notes that women played an important part in royal hunting. Armed guards, mostly women, were purchased from foreign countries, and they "formed an indispensable element in the courts of the ancient Indian monarchs." But it is not clear if the services of Indian women were requisitioned for the purpose. This is perhaps an imitation by Chandragupta of a foreign custom, as we do not come across such instances of royal protection by amazonian body-guards in more ancient writings. That this practice was prevalent in Chandragupta's time is corroborated by the drama *Mudrarākṣhas Act. III*. Strabbo mentions that girls were bought from their parents, and that maidens of prepossessing and handsome appearance were regularly imported at Broach for the royal harem in the 1st century A.D.

Chanakya lays down that "on getting up from bed, the king should be received by troops of women armed with bows," in his *Arthashastra*, Bk. I. Chap. XXI. Professor R. Shyam Shastri's translation of Chanakya's *Arthashastra* is a momentous publication, throwing a flood of light on the polity and state of society in the Maurya period. Chanakya advises to entrust women with the important function of espionage. Clever and poor Brahmin widows called *Parivrajikas*, honoured in the king's harem, should "frequent the residences of the king's prime ministers," and women with shaven head and those of the Sudra caste should be employed as wandering spies. Thus mendicant women and prostitutes were to be deputed to espy the private character of state officials and to convey important information on which the king would take steps, to the institute of espionage. As the government placed a great reliance on espionage for its very existence, the services of women, especially of courtesans in this sphere of public service, were indeed very useful.

The position of a woman in any society is to be determined by the freedom she enjoys, her share in property, the treatment she receives from the custodians of her

personal safety, the nature of her duties as regards inter-relation of the sexes and as mistress of the household. The *Arthashastra* says that of the eight forms of marriage any kind was approvable if that pleased the contracting parties, and the first four forms were valid if approved by the father. The father-in-law could select a man to remarry his widow daughter-in-law, but a widow selecting her own partner forfeited whatever was given to her by her father-in-law and husband. A woman could not make a free use of her *stridhan* if she had a son. Neither the enmity of the wife to her husband, nor that of the husband to his wife, was sufficient for the dissolution of marriage, but a divorce could be obtained for their mutual enmity. Still "marriages contracted in accordance with the customs of the first four kinds of marriage cannot be dissolved." (*Artha.*, Bk. III. Chap. III.) Remarriage of a woman was allowed if her husband had long gone abroad, or had become an ascetic, or was dead within a year, if she had no issue, and after one year, if she had an issue. The man to be selected should be her husband's brother next in age to him, and in the absence of such a person, she might marry one who belonged to the same *gotra* as her husband's.

Thus sufficient freedom was vouchsafed to women in those days, though it had to be restricted in later times. Divorce and remarriage of widows which obtain in Western countries, but which is regarded as the most abominable and heinous of social crimes by modern Hindus as subversive of all laws of morality and canons of chastity, were not unknown in India. There was no hard and fast rule with regard to a Brahmin's marriage with the other three castes. Both forms of marriage such as *anuloma* and *pratiloma* were widely practised, though in later times they were abolished, and only marriages of men and women of equal castes came to be regarded as the legitimate forms of matrimonial union. Absolute authority of the father in the selection of the bridegroom for his daughter, or of the bride for his son, came into practice in the process of time ; and the free-

dom of boys and girls in the selection of their mates was checked later on. Judging from these facts we may conclude that a woman had a large amount of freedom which was curtailed by and by to make her subservient to the will of the sterner sex and absolutely helpless and dependent on her earthly lord.

Now let us see how far the information supplied by the *Arthashastra* tallies with the accounts of Megasthenes, and of the Greek and Roman writers on India. We may accept those of their opinions and conclusions which were corroborated by an authentic work like the *Arthashastra* and reject those which are absurd, which never were, nor are ever consistent with the culture of a highly civilised society. The notes of those writers will be useful so far as they throw an additional light on obscure points of social customs in that remote age.

Strabbo (14 or 24 A.D.) says that boys and girls selected their mates and women died on the funeral pyre of their husbands. Men took their wives for begetting children, and polygamy was in vogue among the less learned and wise. Aristobolus confirms the above statements and mentions some strange and unnatural customs. Those who, on account of their poverty, could not give their daughters in marriage, took them in their youth to the bazaar and attracted customers by the sound of conches and trumpets. A customer being available, the girl, veiled from head to foot, was shown her face, and the customer agreeing contracted the marriage. This is more than we know. Arian in his *Indica* states that girls coming to age were publicly taken to the market, and they selected their husbands who proved strong in hand to hand fight. This custom might have been prevalent among some warrior tribes, but neither contemporary literature, nor tradition can supply any proof of its existence. Diodarus Siculus says that for matrimonial relationship contracting parties had not to depend on their father's will, but were bound in wedlock of their own accord. Immature youngmen afterwards discovered their mistake after a few years of marriage and repented

for their action. Women also sometimes did not like their husbands and used to get rid of them by administering poison. This bad practice was prevalent for a long time. Then it was ruled that unless women were pregnant, they had to follow their husbands in death. Otherwise they would have to live as widows and were looked down as impious if they failed. Such a state of affairs existed in the period of transition when the selection of mates as a consequence of blind amatory effusion of juvenile people continued, and rigid paternal authority which asserted itself naturally in the determination and choice of brides and bridegrooms, had not yet clearly, come into existence, as the evil effects of free selection had begun to manifest their disastrous results on society.

Here is a distinct stage in the evolution of the woman's position in Hindu society. The unrestrained freedom of a woman was checked. Immolation on the funeral pyre—an ancient custom which had become obsolete owing to a widow's free-will to remarry the man of her liking after the decease of her husband and which had degenerated into forced burning in later times—was hedged in with sanctity and came to be regarded as the sole criterion of a married woman's attachment and devotion to her husband. Womanly chastity and purity of character and true greatness consisted in curbing immoderate passions and inordinate desires for free intercourse; and law-givers who sought the welfare of society insisted, with all the force they could command and by an appeal to religion, on young women to subscribe themselves to the superior wisdom of their parents in all matters relating to their future domestic happiness and conjugal felicity. The same distrust of women which we see even in the Vedic Rishis and wise men in different periods of Indian history, showed itself again, and henceforth anecdotes and stories of ideal womanhood were devised and interpolated into sacred writings to make women docile and amenable to religious doctrines.

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## GOD'S HAND.

It is not given to all of us to recognise Truth wherever and whenever we meet it. We may believe in our own scriptures, in our own religion. But how often prejudiced are we when we discuss with men of a different faith who present to us their own belief and scripture as the revealed word of God! Almost identical incidents when recorded in our own books we accept as true, but when we read them in foreign scriptures or accounts we slight them as myths. It is the glory of Hinduism that, at least theoretically, it makes no such distinction, for it is the teaching of Vedanta that God reveals Himself through all the ages to true devotees regardless of nationality, colour or creed.

Open any scripture, and what do you find? From cover to cover the scriptures bear witness to a living God, guiding, protecting and watching over His children. He stretches forth His hand to succour in time of need, to rescue from danger and to nourish those who trust in Him. He often overrules in human affairs and works wonders in heaven and on earth. The worldling sees only good fortune, a happy chance ; but the children of God recognise a brooding Presence, a loving Protector, the Hand of God.

And is it not true that, almost unconsciously, too often we believe that intervening on the part of God was divinely natural in the past, but that now these special interpositions of God's providence are hardly to be expected?

We cannot know God's plans. These plans are not revealed to man, least of all to the prying, inquisitive mind. But that He whose hand protected in the past is with us to-day, we find verified in the lives of godly men in all lands. A few simple stories from the annals of Christian saints perhaps will bring this fact home to us and may help to strengthen and revivify our faith. The

stories are culled and adapted from "The Hand that Intervenes," by W. A. Spicer.

## I

## THE STRANGER.

John Jones, a Methodist preacher, was travelling on horseback through a desolate part of Wales when looking to the right he observed a rough-looking man, armed with a reaping knife, following him on the other side of a hedge that lined the roadside. The man was hurrying along evidently trying to reach before him a gate where it was necessary for the horseman to dismount.

The preacher had a bag of money which he had collected to build a new church. Fearing that not only the money but also his life was in danger, he stopped his horse, and bowing his head he prayed to God for protection. After a moment of silent prayer the horse became restive to go on. Jones looked up, and then to his surprise he saw a man on a white horse alongside of him. This sudden appearance of a fellow-traveller at the moment of danger was most welcome.

Jones told the stranger about the dangerous position in which he had been placed, and how relieved he felt by his unexpected appearance. The stranger made no reply, only gazed intently in the direction of the gate. The preacher followed his gaze, and doing so saw the reaper emerge from behind a bush, and run at full speed across a field to their left. He had evidently seen that there were two men now and had given up his intended attempt to rob the preacher.

All cause of danger being now removed, Jones tried to enter into conversation with his companion, but without the slightest success. Not a word did he get in reply. He continued talking, however, as they rode toward the gate failing to see any reason for, and indeed feeling a little hurt at this strange silence.

Having watched the reaper disappear over the brow of a neighbouring hill, Jones turned to his companion



again, and said, "Can it for a moment be doubted that my prayer was heard, and that you were sent for my deliverance by the Lord?" Then the horseman uttered the single word, 'Amen' (It is truly so). Not another word did he speak, though the preacher continued endeavouring to get from him replies to his questions.

They were now approaching the gate. Jones hurried on his horse for the purpose of opening it. And having done so, he waited for the stranger to pass through. But he came not. Jones turned his head to look for him. He was gone, vanished as unexpectedly and mysteriously as he had appeared.

The preacher was dumbfounded. He looked back in the direction from which they had just been riding, but his companion was not to be seen. He could not have gone through the gate, nor have made his horse leap the high hedges which on both sides shut in the road. Where was he? Could it be possible that there had been no man or horse at all, that it was a vision born of imagination? Jones tried hard to convince himself that this was the case, but in vain; for unless some one had been with him, why had the reaper hurried away? "No," Jones thought, "this horseman was no creature of my imagination. But who could he have been?"

He asked himself this question again and again, and then a feeling of profound awe stole over him. He remembered the singular manner in which the stranger had first appeared. He recollected his silence, and then again that single word to which he had given utterance which had been elicited from him by mentioning the name of the Lord. What could he then believe? But one thing, and that was that his prayer had been heard, and that help had indeed been sent as a response to his prayer.

Full of this thought the preacher threw himself on his knees at the side of the road, praising God who had so signally preserved him from danger.

He then mounted his horse and continued on his journey.

## II

## NON-RESISTANCE.

In the early days of Methodism, in the eighteenth century, John Wesley, the leader of the movement, had many experiences of deliverance by the manifest interposition of God. The message of reform was so unpopular as to arouse the bitterest opposition of the mob who often tried to take his life. Wesley after many unmistakable proofs had the conviction that the hand of God is on every person and thing, ruling events as it seems good to Him. He practised non-resistance and was absolutely fearless trusting altogether that nothing could happen without the will of the Lord.

At Wednesbury, in England, a mob gathered outside his house, shouting, "Bring out the preacher!" The leader of the rabble was asked to come inside the house. Wesley spoke to him a few words when suddenly the man became as docile as a lamb. This man went out and brought in two others who were mad with rage. They also in a few minutes were entirely changed. Then Wesley addressed the mob. They listened and shortly dispersed as if they had forgotten the object that had brought them there.

On another occasion Wesley was pulled and dragged about for hours by a lot of ruffians. He did not resist but kept on praying aloud. At last the leader of these men turned and said, "Sir, I will protect you. Follow me, and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head." He took Wesley by the hand and led him away carrying him through a river on his shoulders to escape his wild companions.

One day while preaching in an open square, one man to stop him began bawling at Wesley's ear. Others threw stones. But the stones instead of hitting Wesley struck the bawling man, and he ran away. Another tried to push the preacher off, when a stone struck him on the forehead, and he fell down unconscious. A third man got close to Wesley, and when he tried to pull the

preacher down was hit by a sharp stone, disabling him. All this time with stones flying about him, Wesley preached on unscathed.

In Ireland a mayor sent agents to disturb his meetings. They threw at the preacher whatever came to hand, but nothing hit him. He walked quietly forward, looking the mob in the face, and the rioters opened right and left to let him pass. When he reached a friend's house, a ruffian stood in the door to prevent his entrance. One of the mob aimed a blow at Wesley, but instead of hitting him he knocked the ruffian down flat. Then Wesley stepped inside the house. Through all this tumult Wesley felt no fear and no resentment. His mind was firmly fixed on God.

One day Wesley went to visit the bedside of a sick man. Scarcely had he entered the house and sat down when a multitude of shouting people gathered outside. It was a terrible noise and confusion. The mob roared, "Bring out the Methodist! Where is the Methodist?" Then they forced open the outer door and filled the passage. Some of the ruffians being angry at the slowness of the rest, pushed them aside, and setting their shoulders to the inner door, cried out, "Stop, lads, stop!" The hinges broke, and the door fell back into the room.

Wesley stepped forward into the midst of the crowd and said, "Here I am. Which of you has anything to say to me?" The ruffians were dumbfounded and let him pass. And the captain of the mob following Wesley swore that no man should touch him.

About this incident Wesley wrote in his journal: "I never saw before \* \* \* the hand of God so clearly shown as here. \* \* \* Although the hands of hundreds of people were lifted up to strike or throw, yet they were one and all stopped in the midway; so that not a man touched me with his fingers; neither was anything thrown from first to last. \* \* \* Who can deny that God heareth prayer, or that He has all power in heaven and earth?"

## THE FOREIGN PROPAGANDA FOR INDIA.\*

BY DR. BHUPENDRA NATH DUTT, M.A., PH.D.

The problem of "Propaganda for India in Foreign Lands" is agitating the minds of our politicians to-day, and there are two kinds of opinion on the matter. The one section does not believe in foreign propaganda ; it wants to cut off India from the rest of the world ; it anathematises everything that bears the brand "foreign." Indeed, this section is trying to build a Chinese Wall around India ; it is trying to prevent the world-currents from flowing into our land. On the other hand, the other section believes in foreign propaganda, but they have launched out nothing as yet. Personally, I am a believer of propaganda for India in foreign lands, and the exiles and emigrants living in foreign lands have done their quota of the work unaided. But in our practical experiences we have found out that without help and backing from the mother country India cannot be represented properly abroad.

The work "Foreign Propaganda abroad" needs a little elucidation. By "Foreign Propaganda for India" I don't mean only political propaganda for India in England. I mean also representation of Indian activities in all their aspects, namely, political, religious, cultural, scientific, economical etc. in different lands. During my sojourn in Europe and America I have found out that in some countries like America there is an open hostility against India, and in other countries complete ignorance in matters Indian, which have given rise to prejudices.

In this matter of terrible prejudices against India, there are two agencies which are accountable for this sad state of things :—firstly, the imperialism of the dominant nations, and secondly, the Christian missionary propaganda.

\* Notes of a short lecture delivered in Calcutta.

Unfortunately the Christian missionaries in their zeal for propaganda become the protagonists of their national chauvinism. Of course, in our present condition we cannot combat the first, but we can dispel to a certain extent the prejudices that exist against India in various ways. And it is the duty of educated India to take up this task. We must show the civilised world that we live, think and have our beings just as they do, that we have the same kind of human aspirations, problems and determination to solve them, and that we are determined to take our share in solving the common problems of mankind.

In this matter, I am at variance with that tendency which wants to isolate India from outside in the name of nationalism. We cannot remain isolated. Indeed history says that India was never cut off from the rest of the world. Migrations have taken place in India from the outside and gone out of this land. The historians say that Plato was influenced by the Indian thought. The American Prof. Ross says that within the last 50 years the Indian philosophy has tremendously influenced the Occidental thought. If that be the case in the past, there is no reason why India should not again give her best to outside.

In this matter, the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order and their disciples have done and are still doing their utmost in giving the best of Indian thought according to their lights, ideals and world-views. They are doing their quota in dispelling the prejudices against the Indians. Many ladies and gentlemen in America have told me that before Swami Vivekananda went there, they were fed up with the stories of mothers throwing their babies into the Ganges to be devoured by crocodiles, and mark it well that in the pictures depicting this story the babies were painted white and the mothers black! I will give you another illustration. I was in Providence in 1913 when once I read in the papers that the Secretary of the Ramabai Association asked the American public to supply the Association with funds for continuing their

work in India as the Hindus there burn their widows and throw their babies into the Ganges! Reading this I made an appointment with the lady in order to disabuse her mind regarding India. I visited her. She breathed fire and brimstone for three hours against me, and finally said: "What would have been your fate if the missionaries had not gone there!"

Perhaps historically that was partially true that the missionaries started first the modern educational system in India, but I am not sure whether such kind of fanatical propaganda helps India. Therefore the work of the Swamis in this direction has been invaluable. In religious conferences and in various kinds of societies they have spoken for India.

In the same way some of the Mahomedan sects are sending their representatives in foreign lands, and they are doing the thing in the right direction. Every sect or people should do its level best to dispel the misconceptions that exist about them, and give others the best that they have to give. There should be contact between the East and the West in every kind of activity of life. In this matter, we should follow the Japanese method, who show themselves up in every kind of international congress and conference.

It is for the public to take up the cause. If we want to go abreast with the rest of mankind, if we want to be a living nation, we must come in cultural and other kinds of contact with all the countries of the world. We cannot afford to keep ourselves aloof. The only way is to allow the world-currents to come in our midst and not to build a Chinese Wall around us and say that we are the most spiritual people. We should give our best to humanity and take the best others have to give us, and then there will be mutual amity, peace and good-will in the world.

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## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from p. 475.)

सर्गादौ प्रकृतिर्ह्यस्य कार्यकारणरूपिणी ॥

सत्त्वादिभिर्गुणैर्धत्ते पुरुषोऽव्यक्त ईक्षते ॥ १७ ॥

17. In the projection,<sup>1</sup> etc., of this universe, the Prakriti, transformed into causes and effects,<sup>2</sup> assumes, through the Gunas such as the Sattva, etc., the conditions for such modification. But the Purusha, unmodified,<sup>3</sup> merely looks on.

[1 *Projection &c.*—i.e. projection, continuity and dissolution.

<sup>2</sup> *Causes and effects*: The causes are—Mahat, Egoism and the five subtle elements. The effects are—the five gross elements, the ten organs and the Manas or mind.

<sup>3</sup> *Unmodified &c.*—Hence it is distinct from the Prakriti.]

व्यक्तादयो विकुर्वाणा धातवः पुरुषेक्षया ॥

लब्धवीर्याः सृजन्त्यण्डं संहताः प्रकृतेर्वलात् ॥ १८ ॥

18. The component elements such as the Mahat, etc., while transforming, are charged with power under the glance of the Purusha, and, supported by the Prakriti, combine<sup>1</sup> and form the universe.

[1 *Combine &c.*—Hence the universe can be grouped under those several categories.]

सप्तैव धातव इति तत्रार्थाः पञ्च खादयः ॥

ज्ञानमात्मोभयाधारस्ततो देहेन्द्रियासवः ॥ १९ ॥

19. The view that the components are only seven in number, comprises the five elements such as ether,<sup>1</sup> etc., together with the Jiva and the Supreme Self, which is the substratum of both subject and object. From these seven proceed<sup>2</sup> the body, the organs and the Pranas.

[1 *Ether &c.*—The five gross elements. The causes from Prakriti down to the subtle elements inhere in these.

<sup>2</sup> *Proceed &c.*—Hence the remaining sixteen categories are accounted for.]

बडित्यत्रापि भूतानि पञ्च षष्ठः परः पुमान् ॥

तैर्युक्त आत्मसम्भूतैः सृष्टेदं समुपाविशत् ॥ २० ॥

20. The view that there are six categories, comprises the five elements and the Supreme Self,<sup>1</sup> which makes up the sixth. This Supreme Self, being provided with the five elements, which have emanated out of Itself, has made all this<sup>2</sup> and entered into it.

[1 *The Supreme Self*—which includes the Jiva of the previous enumeration.

2 *All this*—the body and everything else.]

चत्वार्येवेति तत्रापि तेज आपोऽन्नमात्मनः ॥

जातानि तैरिदं जातं जन्मावयविनः खलु ॥ २१ ॥

21. In the view limiting the categories to four only, fire, water and earth, together with the Atman from which they have sprung, are meant. It is from these<sup>1</sup> that the origin of all effects has taken place.

[1 *From these &c.*—So they are all included in these four.]

संख्याने सप्तदशके भूतमात्रेन्द्रियाणि च ॥

पञ्च पञ्चैकमनसा आत्मा सप्तदशः स्मृतः ॥ २२ ॥

22. In the enumeration of seventeen categories the gross elements, the subtle elements and the organs—five of each—together with the mind and the Atman constitute the seventeen.

तद्वत्षोडशसंख्याने आत्मैव मन उच्यते ॥

भूतेन्द्रियाणि पञ्चैव मन आत्मा त्रयोदश ॥ २३ ॥

23. Similarly, in the enumeration of sixteen categories the Atman<sup>1</sup> itself is taken as the mind. The five elements, the five organs, the mind and the twofold<sup>2</sup> Atman—these make up the thirteen categories.

[1 *Atman &c.*—as cogitating.

2 *Twofold &c.*—as Jiva and Paramatman.]

एकादशत्वं आत्मासौ महाभूतेन्द्रियाणि च ॥

अष्टौ प्रकृतयश्चैव पुरुषश्च नवेत्यथ ॥ २४ ॥



24. In the enumeration of eleven categories this Atman, the five elements and the five organs are taken into consideration. While the eight causes<sup>1</sup> and the Purusha make up the nine categories.

[1 *Eight causes*—i.e. Prakriti, Mahat, Egoism, and the five subtle elements.]

इति नानाप्रसंख्यानं तत्त्वानामृषिभिः कृतम् ॥

सर्वं न्याय्यं युक्तिमत्त्वाद्विदुषां किमशोभनम् ॥ २५ ॥

25. Thus the sages have made various enumerations of the categories. All of these, being reasonable, are apposite. What indeed is inappropriate for the learned?

उद्धव उवाच ॥

प्रकृतिः पुरुषश्चोभौ यद्यप्यात्मविलक्षणौ ॥

अन्योन्यापास्त्रयात्कृष्ण दृश्यते न भिदा तयोः ॥

प्रकृतौ लक्ष्यते ह्यात्मा प्रकृतिश्च तथात्मनि ॥ २६ ॥

Uddhava said :

26. O Krishna, though the Prakriti and the Purusha are mutually distinct<sup>1</sup> by their very nature, yet their distinction is not perceived as they are never found apart. The Atman, verily, is seen in the Prakriti,<sup>2</sup> and likewise the Prakriti in the Atman.

[1 *Distinct*—one being sentient and the other insentient.

<sup>2</sup> *Prakriti*—i.e. its effect, the body. They are mixed up and perceived as the "I."]

एवं मे पुण्डरीकाक्ष महान्तं संशयं हृदि ॥

छेत्तुमर्हसि सर्वज्ञ वचोभिर्नयनैपुणैः ॥ २७ ॥

27. O Lotus-eyed, Omniscient Lord, Thou shouldst dispel this great doubt in my heart with words skilled in reasoning.

त्वत्तो ज्ञानं हि जीवानां प्रमोषस्तेऽत्र शक्तिः ॥

त्वमेव ह्यात्ममायाया गतिं वेत्थ न चापरः ॥ २८ ॥

28. It is from Thee that people get illumination, and from Thy Power<sup>1</sup> it is that they are robbed of it. Thou

alone knowest the course of Thy inscrutable Power, and none else.

[1 Power—Maya.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच ॥

प्रकृतिः पुरुषश्चेति विकल्पः पुरुषर्षभ ॥

एष वैकारिकः सर्गो गुणव्यतिकरात्मकः ॥ २९ ॥

The Lord said :

29. O best of men, the Prakṛiti and the Puruṣa are entirely distinct<sup>1</sup> entities. This projected universe is subject to modifications, for it has sprung from a disturbance among the Gunas.

[1 Distinct—This distinction is brought out first by describing the ever-changing nature of the Prakṛiti in this and the next two verses.]

ममाङ्ग माया गुणमथ्यनेकधा विकल्पबुद्धीश्च गुणैर्दिधत्ते ॥

वैकारिकस्त्रिविधोऽध्यात्ममेकमथाधिदैवमधिभूतमन्यत् ॥ ३० ॥

30. My friend, My inscrutable Power, consisting of the Gunas, creates through these Gunas innumerable modifications and ideas relating thereto. Even though subject to all sorts of modifications, yet the universe is, broadly speaking, threefold<sup>1</sup>—one pertaining to the body, another to the gods, and a third to the creatures.

[1 Threefold—This will be expanded in the next verse.]

दृग्रूपमाकं वपुरत्र रन्ध्रे परस्परं सिध्यति यः स्वतः खे ॥

आत्मा यदेयामपरो य आद्यः स्वयानुभूत्याखिलसिद्धासिद्धः ॥

एवं त्वगादि श्रवणादि चक्षुर्जिह्वादि नासादि च चित्तयुक्तम् ॥ ३१ ॥

31. The eye,<sup>1</sup> the form, and the solar rays penetrating the eye-ball—these depend<sup>2</sup> upon one another for their manifestation ; but the sun which is in the sky exists independently.<sup>3</sup> Because the Atman<sup>4</sup> is the primeval cause of these,<sup>5</sup> it is distinct from them. By Its self-effulgence It is the Illuminer of all those that help to manifest one another. Similarly<sup>6</sup> with reference to the skin, the ear, the eye, the tongue, the nose, and the mind, etc.

[1 *The Eye &c.*—exemplifying respectively the three aspects spoken of in verse 30.

2 *Depend &c.*—We see the form and infer the other two factors in its perception.

3 *Independently*—It does not require any support and is not affected by the defects of the latter.

4 *Atman &c.*—This distinctive character of the Purusha is being pointed out: It is the only unchanging Self-effulgent Principle.

5 *These*—three divisions of the universe.

6 *Similarly &c.*—Each of these has its triangular relation with two other things. For example, the skin has got touch and air; the ear, sound and the quarters; the tongue, taste and Varuna; the nose, smell and the Aswins; Chitta, object of recognition and Vāsudeva; Manas, object of cogitation and the moon; Buddhi, object of determination and Brahmā; and Egoism, object of identification and Rudra.]

(To be continued.)

## THE SUMMER YOGA CLASS AT THE SHANTI ASHRAMA.

Nestled among the beautiful hills of sunny California, adorned with the wealth of myriad wild flowers, there is a quiet holy spot where Nature has implanted a bit of her soul in each tree, rock and flower. Even the zephyrs that blow there whisper in soft cadence the eternal Om, and birds sing as if to burst their feathered throats in the joy of this hushed spot.

Is it any wonder then that those favoured mortals who have been privileged to visit and dwell for a time in this garden of Mother, cannot find words to describe all that they find welling in their heart for expression?

In June 1925, Swami Prakashananda called a large class of students to this beautiful retreat for a month of study, aspiration and enlightenment. How blessed was this group! Mother spoke through all Her aspects in the heart of each one there.

Now She chided or dragged from its dark retreat some forgotten vice and cast it before our eyes, so that we might "see ourselves as others see us." Then She

gave us love and sympathy, or forced pride, jealousy or rebellion out of some forgotten corner to smother it the next moment with courage and loyalty. The most subtle sin She dragged mercilessly before our eyes that we might in shame discard our pride and egotism and humbly and charitably grow in love and reverence. But always the Christ Child dwelt there, the living embodiment and example of selfless love and compassion, that in its purity can in one moment kill that which enslaves, and in the next inspire the noblest patience and courage, both with equal loving kindness.

There is no sword so sharp as the sword of love to cut the festering sin from an enslaved character and no balm so soothing as a glimpse of that Divine Love-light even as it cuts from your heart forever some secretly cherished sin. Agony becomes as joy and joy as agony, and all is swallowed in aspiration to reach the highest purity.

The Ashrama is ideally located for a Peace Retreat, set as it is in the hills. It is surrounded with them like an enormous basin. Off the highways, distant from the trains, it is completely away from all the distractions and turmoil and noise of the world. The holy peace of the Ashrama sinks in deep silence, and in a few days the mind becomes calm and ceases to feel hurried and rushed. Thus it can more clearly reflect the Spirit within, and meditations in such peace and tranquillity bring Divine Mother very close.

In the centre of the Ashrama grounds is what is called the Meditation Cabin, in which is an inspiring picture of Sri Ramakrishna, also one of the Holy Mother, and many smaller pictures of the Swamis. And although all the Ashrama is blessed and filled with high spiritual forces, yet this Cabin seems to be an especial focus for them. It was indeed an inspiration to enter this Sanctuary and meditate.

The month was a busy one. Every evening at five-thirty the blowing of the horn would awaken the whole Ashrama to prepare the students for morning meditation.

At six o'clock it was an inspiring sight to see the students march in procession with the chanting of Hari Om towards the meditation platform arranged under the shady spreading oak, and then to sit in squatting Yoga-posture to perform the morning meditation.

After half an hour of silent contemplation, the Swami read to us from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna as yet not translated into English.

By listening to these wonderful conversations and teachings of Bhavagan Sri Ramakrishna recorded by "M" in these rare books, we at times would be transported into the banks of the Ganges and stand in the living presence of the Master, as it were.

At noon we again congregated for meditation in the same manner, and the Swami read to us the instructions of Kapila to his mother Devahuti, from the Shrimat Bhagavatam. Until we heard the Swami, we had never known that this ancient book contained such rare gems of spiritual wisdom leading us almost to the threshold of Divine Illumination.

Again when the surrounding hills of the coast-ranges reflected the glow of the setting sun and the gradual approach of the evening dusk would transform nature into the misty grey, we would sit in rapt meditation, and the Swami would slowly awaken us from its charms by his mellifluous Sanskrit chants, which we so love to hear again and again.

The two meals cooked and supervised by the ladies were served in the big dining room at eight-thirty a.m., and four-thirty p.m. The Swami called these meals "offerings", and each one of us had to learn the Sanskrit chant for offering, "Brahmarpanam" etc., and repeated in unison before each meal. At the end of each meal the Swami would give us choicest utterances of our revered Swami Vivekananda from different volumes of his Complete Works.

The culmination of the month was the Dhuni Night. We all looked forward to it and tried as earnestly as possible to prepare ourselves for it. We tried to learn

what seeds of egoism, pettiness, jealousy, etc., were still in us, taking root and growing. And truly it did seem like a rooting-out, a cleansing and a purification when we cast these seeds into the Sacred flames. It was in very truth the beginning of a new life.

The Dhuni Fire was lighted on one of the Ashrama hills, a hill rendered especially sacred because of the many Dhuni Fires and services held there. All through the night until dawn there was chanting, singing, meditation, reading, the ceremony of the burning of our faults, etc. And at dawn as we watched for the rising of the sun, suddenly the crescent of the new moon appeared from behind the hills, sharp and thin like a scimitar. This new moon seemed another symbol of the cutting of the knots of our hearts and of the beginning of a purer, ever more purposeful life.

During the month besides the regular meditations and classes, each student was asked to observe a day of silence with the repetition of the Divine name.

On the last Sunday of the month the neighbours were invited and treated to a sumptuous feast of Indian rice, curry and other delicacies cooked by the Swami himself.

The students as well as the children of neighbours gave recitations and sang songs, all enjoying immensely such a social gathering to which they look forward with great joy and interest.

No one can comprehend what a boon this Ashrama has been to us, living in the midst of constant rush and frenzied activities of the city life. It is no wonder that our hearts rise in reverential gratitude to Sri Ramakrishna and his greatest apostle Swami Vivekananda and other blessed Swamis who made the existence of such an Ashrama possible for us in this Western world.

We feel a deep debt of obligation to India and especially to the Ramakrishna Mission for sending to us such worthy souls to help us and guide us in our paths towards the attainment of Divine Wisdom.

The month at the Shanti Ashrama was surely of

tremendous import in the life of each one of us. No one could be there and fail to feel, in some degree, the subtle forces of the place. It was as if we were in the very arms of the Divine Mother and could feel the throb and beat of Her heart. It did affect all of us differently, perhaps, yet such forces must inevitably leave a permanent impress on our lives and characters. To be sure such forces might stir up all the sediment which, all unrecognised possibly, was down at the bottom of our hearts, but could anything be more vitally important to us? In the wonderful peace and quiet of the Ashrama, there would be time and opportunity to throw out the sediment as it rose to the surface of our mind, and we could return to our tasks and duties in the world with purer hearts and a clearer knowledge of ourselves—with hearts strengthened and refreshed through our closer communion with Divine Mother.

Western Disciples  
at the feet of  
Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna

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## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

LIFE OF H. H. MAHARAJA TUKOJI RAO HOLKAR II.—By M. W. Burway. Published by the author from the Holkar State Printing Press, Indore. Pp. 642 & xcvi. Price, Rs. 15.

This big volume with 59 illustrations delineates the life and career of a native ruler who is said to have fought hard for the dignity and prestige of his State till the last moment of his earthly existence. No pains have been spared to collect materials and make the work authentic and complete. The book may be appreciated by those who love and admire the Maharaja as well as by the native princes of India.

**SADGURU-RAHASYA (HINDI).**—By Kumar Kosalendrapratap Sahi, Rai Bahadur. Published by the Hindi Mandir, Allahabad. Pp. 219. Price, Rs. 2-8.

The book under review is a devotional treatise dealing with Bhakti—love of God, as the easiest and surest means for the realisation of the *summum bonum* of life. The author has left no stone unturned to make the book attractive by quoting at random from Hindi, Sanskrit and English writers and inserting illustrations in places. The get up and printing have also been superb. In the chapter '*Science and Bhakti*' the symbolic representation of the world of Maya having a human skeleton surrounded by some samples of the modern scientific invention is interesting though funny. The long list of errata at the beginning goes to the discredit of the publisher, and we hope that this defect will be remedied in the next edition.

**HINDU-MUSLIM PRASNA (HINDI).**—By Lala Lajpat Rai. Published by Ambica Prasad Bajpeyi from the Indian National Press, 159B, Mechua Bazar Street, Calcutta. Pp. 89. Price, As. 8.

A collection of articles that originally appeared in various newspapers and periodicals, dealing with the Hindu-Muslim problem. In this transitional period of Indian history when we are struggling for national self-determination, there is no problem so important as that of the Hindu-Muslim unity. But unfortunately as current events go to show, the unity between the Hindus and the Mahomedans is becoming an impossible thing. Communal quarrels and religious fanaticism reign supreme throughout the land, specially between these two communities. In the book before us we find the views and practical suggestions on the problem of a consummate thinker and veteran leader like Lalaji, which deserve the serious consideration of our countrymen.

**SONNETS AND OTHER POEMS.**—By S. M. Michael. Published by the Modern Literature Company, Hogarth



Press, Post Box No. 344, Mount Road, Madras.  
Pp. 63. Price, Re. 1-4.

These gems of English verse are from the pen of one who though not widely known seems to be a budding poet. He has a fine imagination, a keen susceptibility to beauty and a wide sympathy combined with a good grasp of English diction and versification. As we read the poems, we felt their naturalness and spontaneity. Prof. P. Seshadri, M.A. of the Benares Hindu University speaks highly of the writer in an appreciative foreword with which the book opens. We wish we could quote extensively from the book, but want of space will not permit us to do that. The following lines from '*Europe—An Elegy*' will serve as samples :

"Peerless thou stood but yesterday in pride  
That stood as high as Heav'n, like Glory's bride  
And smiled in scorn of all the universe.—  
But now thy soaring pride has proved thy curse.  
Too high thou held thy crowned and laurelled head :  
Too proud before thy God then grew thy tread.  
Thy glory vanished now, thy splendours fled,  
Thy loveliness all gone, thou all but dead,  
O hapless Europe, now I see thee bleed,  
Unhappy mother, by thy very breed."

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## REPORTS AND APPEALS.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA  
MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES, FOR 1924.

The work of the institution shows a steady increase in its usefulness. In the year under review 1,302 persons were admitted into the Indoor Hospital—a figure which surpasses all previous records. From the Outdoor Dispensary 14,784 patients were treated. Besides these, the Home has extended its work in other useful ways. It

gives free board and lodge to a number of invalids, male and female ; it admits boys and girls who are given proper training under qualified workers, and there is a weaving department which turns out young men fit to earn an independent livelihood. Besides, poor but respectable families are helped with weekly and monthly doles of rice, money, clothing etc., sometimes in their own houses, and occasional help is given to deserving people in the form of free meals, passage money etc. In the year under review the total income, including the last year's balance, is Rs. 84,948, and the expenditure is Rs. 58,857-5-10. The Home appeals for funds for the endowment of more beds for patients, for a building for accommodating workers and a permanent shed for the home-industry department. The public will, we hope, extend help to this useful institution.

THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA  
MISSION SEVASHRAMA, MUTHIGUNJ, ALLAHABAD, FOR  
1924.

Situated at a provincial capital and a very important place of Hindu pilgrimage, the Ashrama is fulfilling a crying need. During the year under review 16,749 sick persons were treated irrespective of caste and creed. But as the Ashrama is greatly handicapped for want of funds, it finds it difficult to cope with the ever increasing amount of disease and suffering amongst the people. The Ashrama is in great need of an Indoor Hospital of at least six beds, for which a plot of land has already been purchased. The building will cost about Rs. 10,000 approximately. We trust the generous public will render all possible help to this useful institution.

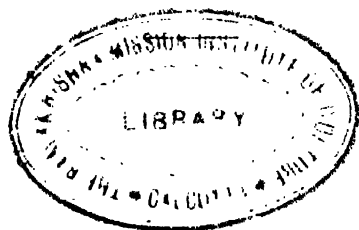
THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION  
CHARITABLE DISPENSARY AT BELUR, HOWRAH, FOR 1924.

The dispensary has been a great boon to the poor population of many miles round, as the locality is greatly infested with malaria. The dispensary administers not only free medicine, but diet and pecuniary help also

are given, if necessary. In the year under review 9,979 patients were treated, of whom 3,997 were new cases. This year Kala-azar patients were treated with injections, and 33 such cases were taken up. Any contribution in the shape of money, medicine or the like should be sent to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur (Howrah).

#### REPORT OF THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY FOR 1924.

In the year under review the Society arranged 37 lectures on philosophy and religion by eminent scholars, Pundits and Sannyasins, held 12 monthly conversazioni, in different parts of the city and conducted weekly religious classes in the Society-room. It also celebrated the birthday anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda and Bhagavan Buddha Deva. The Society helped 26 poor students in the year, and from the Charitable Dispensary altogether 400 patients were treated. The Society conducts also a Library and Free Reading Room, which seems to have been fairly utilised by the public. The total receipts of the Society amounted to Rs. 5,196-13-0, including the balance of the previous year. The amount spent was Rs. 2,891-5-6, leaving a balance of Rs. 2,305-7-6, of which Rs. 1,493-14-0 belongs to the Building Fund. The Society is trying to raise funds for the erection of a building which may serve as a sacred memorial to the illustrious Swami Vivekananda in his birthplace in Calcutta and also supply a house of its own to facilitate its work. It is estimated that about Rs. 50,000 will be required for the purpose, and any contribution towards that will be thankfully received by the Secretary of the Society at 78-1, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.



## NEWS AND NOTES.

### THE CONQUERORS CONQUERED.

The conquest of soul, though slow and imperceptible, has more far-reaching effects than a physical conquest that is quick and ostentatious. The former works slowly and silently, but is steady in its result. It touches the inner man and transforms the individual. But the latter proceeds with a proud display of brute force and captures the body, whereas the soul remains unaffected. Hence it will not be saying too much if we say that physical conquest is no conquest. Has it not been said of Greece that she conquered Rome, her conqueror, by her art, literature and philosophy?

In a beautiful article appearing in the 'Bombay Chronicle,' Mr. M. M. Gidwani while recounting the experiences of his recent tour in Europe speaks of the silent influence of Indian civilisation on England. He says—"The influence of India on England is subtle. It resembles those geological movements which go on every day, every minute, imperceptibly, but none the less surely beneath the earth's surface." Of course, England loudly proclaims her conquest by machine-guns, aeroplanes, wireless telegraphy and radio. But India is modest in her aspiration. She aims at silently conquering her conqueror by her unique achievements in the field of literature, art, philosophy and religion. The writer mentions how the work of Dr. Rabindranath and Swami Vivekananda are slowly working amongst the educated circles of England who hanker after truth irrespective of all considerations of colour, creed or nationality. Incidentally he narrates some touching incidents of his personal experience and proves this fact.

While at Stratford-on-Avon he had the occasion of being the guest of an English countess, Lady Sandwich. He had talked, he says, to famous people in England, given interviews and signed autographs, and he was then

thirsting for a quiet time when his hostess referred him to a room upstairs, called 'the Swami's Room.' "Presently I found myself in a Hindu temple!" says the writer feelingly." It was a carpeted room with idols, photos of Swami Vivekananda, flowers and Hindu religious books. This was the only place of its kind I had been to in Great Britain, and the few hours I passed there in silent thought were the happiest recollection of my tour in Europe. I guessed that my kind hostess must be a disciple of the great Swami, and when later I found her distributing flowers from 'the Swami's Room' to a group of English friends I had no doubt of it. I began to ask myself the question—"Who was ruling Stratford-on-Avon, Shakespear or Vivekananda?" "

#### A NEGLECTED POINT OF EDUCATION.

Self-confidence is the first condition of success in every sphere of life. In proportion to the confidence a man has in any undertaking, he comes out triumphant. To fear has rightly been termed as a great sin. For, fear is the cause of all weakness and failure in life. It very often falsely circumscribes the possibilities of our life and curbs our real strength. Only in a weak physique germs of disease can act, whereas a strong body easily withstands the influence of many dangerous bascilli. Our body if weak becomes susceptible to disease at first, before we actually fall ill. In the same way through fear and loss of self-confidence, one invites failures much before they actually come.

However much we may labour and persevere, we cannot be sure of achieving an end, unless we have the conviction of success. For, without that we shall always have some misgivings whether we are not fighting for a lost case or an impossible undertaking. An ideal which is too high is not worth aspiring after. A work which we think does not come within the bounds of possibility, is doomed to failure. When we set our hands to a thing, we have very often a mental picture of it as accomplished, and it is this picture which serves as a beacon

light and source of strength amidst all trials and difficulties. The dream of the discovery of a new land was so very real and vivid in the case of Columbus that he was not in the least daunted, though after a long, weary voyage in the unknown sea all his followers not only got disgusted with his mad project but actually stood against him. He was not even slightly discouraged, because the conviction of success was so strong in him that he could easily set aside the opinion of the whole world.

This law is so true in all fields of activity—material, moral and spiritual. The man who calls up courage and tries to be above all weakness, is safe from hundred attacks of Mara or Satan, who is ever on the alert to prey upon a soul. John Bunyan has rightly said that in the path of a religious aspirant, very often stands a grim-looking lion, which frightens away chicken-hearted persons, but is quite harmless to a dauntless spirit. It is a great truth, strongly preached by a sage that we become sinners as soon as we *think* ourselves to be such.. It is an age of self-assertion. We are to assert our rights as children of Bliss and claim our Divine inheritance, before we can expect a real success in the spiritual world. It was this spirit which led Buddha to call up indomitable strength and energy when his body and mind and the forces of nature conspired together to desist him from his undertaking.

Now, this spirit of faith in oneself is what is greatly needed to be implanted in all young minds. If education is the *unfoldment* of perfection *already* in man, all that an educationist should do is to convince his students about the truth of that. He need not go to work out every detail for his pupils. He should simply see that the latter grow in confidence and imbibe positive ideas. A child which is always led by the hand is sure to be weak and crippled. Let him rather stumble and fall, and he will soon learn to walk unaided with his head erect. Now, if this spirit is rightly cultivated in educational sanctuaries, the teachers will be saved from much of their labours, and sighs of despair will blast a less number of lives.

## THE BASIS OF INDIAN NATIONAL UNITY.

If India is to rise as one nation, her leaders should try to find out the common ground in which all her people may meet and fight with a common end in view. Otherwise disruptive forces may at any time be let loose and break the dream of a united India. Critics who view Indian aspirations with neglect and contempt are heard very often to say that it will ever be a foolish hope, for a population of more than 300 millions, speaking as many as 200 dialects and belonging to so many contending faiths, to unite together. Really, if some common meeting-points are not discovered, the hope of Indian national unity will ever remain illusive.

If we observe closely, we find that the factors which go to fuse together a number of people into one nation are geographical position, centralised government, common language and common religion and culture. Now, to have a united India, we must take advantage of the one or more of these factors.

The geographical position of India guarded by seas and walled by mountains is peculiarly suited to unite her people. But, it may be said, throughout the history of India, excepting for two or three times, we have not seen a united India, and that has been done under the aegis of centralised government. To keep a people united on the basis of one government cannot, however, be hoped to last for a long time. For, as soon as the central government becomes weak or breaks up, the centrifugal forces are invariably at work. At the present time, a common fate under a common government has, no doubt, gone a great way to create a common interest amongst the people of all the provinces, but we cannot say that disintegrating factors are wholly absent. For many incidents of contemporary history characterised by jealousy, heart-burning and rivalry may be cited, and they can be traced to a spirit of provincialism. This clearly shows that although the provinces on occasions meet in one platform, they are not altogether disinterested.

A theory has recently been started to create a much surer bond of fellowship amongst the people of different denominations by bringing into existence a *lingua franca*. A common language and a common script may serve as a means of understanding one another better, but it is doubtful whether a created *lingua franca* can ever take the place of the mother tongue, so that it may give rise to an idea of essential unity.

The last thing that we may turn to is a common culture and a common religion. A critical student of Indian history will surely find that this is the one point, where we can meet together and be one with love and sympathy for one another. A man from the furthest corner of Assam will unhesitatingly embrace a Tamilian at Kanyakumari or Hardwar as brother, because both draw the sustenance of their inner life from the same source, viz., one culture. Again a Gujrati and a Bengalee, when abroad, cannot but feel proud, if they are to be proud of anything, when they remember that they have got one culture at their back. Now, along with others this common cultural basis will serve as a great cementing factor to keep together the disintegrating molecules of the Indian body politic, and we think this is the point where great stress should be given.

India, indeed, has been the chief seat or birthplace of as many as five religions out of the eight great religions of the world. But of all countries, India has shown the way how different faiths may have a common meeting ground and live together with mutual respect and tolerance. Of course, India has been from very ancient times the battlefield of many conflicting cultures, but by dint of her innate strength she has been able, in the long run, to assimilate them and evolve a unique culture. Though we find, at the present moment, many warring factors likely to disintegrate India, we cannot be altogether without any hope that they may be led to one direction, where all conflicts will cease and peace will arise for the good of India, and for the good of humanity.



## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS.

### PUDUR (VANIYAMBADI).

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with great success at the Ramakrishna Math, Pudur, Vaniyambadi, on the 23rd of August, 1925. The morning programme consisted of Bhajan and music. After that a portrait of Sri Ramakrishna tastefully decorated with flowers was taken in a procession through some of the principal streets of the town. Special worship and Homa were performed in the Math chapel, and the feeding of about 1,500 Daridra Narayanas in the Math compounds was a special feature of the day's function. This was followed by a meeting in the afternoon held under the presidency of Mr. V. Shanmuga Mudaliar, a leading merchant of the place. The President delivered an interesting lecture dealing with the greatness of Sri Ramakrishna and of his disciple Swami Vivekananda. Mr. K. S. Lakshmanswami Iyengar read in English an instructive paper on 'Vivekananda, the Man and his Message.' With a vote of thanks to the Chair, Arati and distribution of Prasad, the meeting terminated.

### GAUHATI (ASSAM).

The birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated by the Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Gauhati, on the 2nd of August last, with due pomp and solemnity. Among other features of the celebration, a meeting held at the local Town Hall with Mr. T. R. Phookan, the well-known popular leader of Assam, in the chair, deserves mention. Mr. I. K. Prasanta Murti spoke at length on 'Universal Religious Union,' showing the contribution of the great Swamiji in this direction. The Chairman called upon the youngmen of the country in the name of Swamiji to be up and doing 'with muscles of iron and nerves of steel' and take up the national cause of selfless service. The meeting dissolved with usual formalities.

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत ।



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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VOL. XXX. DECEMBER, 1925. No. 12.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

*9th January, 1921.*

“Do not ruffle the mind. Did you not, only the other day, come from Calcutta? If you go now, it will be setting a bad example. Control the mind, be not controlled by it. Surrender yourself to Him alone, your everything,—your body, mind and soul.”—Thus said the Swami to one who sat before him, and then sang a song of Ramprasad, which said: ‘O my Mind-bird, why fly from tree to tree tasting different fruits? Make thy eternal nest on One who can offer thee the Greatest Fruit.’

The conversation then turned on the power of the Mantra. The Swami said: “Yes, one can cure disease by the power of the mystic formulas. But by His will, I have learnt to have greater faith in Him who is back of that power.”

D— said: “Kindly so make my mind that I may not feel even the difference of her sex when I see a woman.”

He replied: "Look to the Atman, not to the body. Practise to have the mind ever fixed on the Atman." He then quoted from the Gita: 'One gets attached to objects by constantly thinking of them. From attachment comes longing, and from longing anger.'

And he said: "Anger is a concentrated form of lust. It makes one lose one's head completely. Lust does not so absolutely overwhelm the mind. Never think of transient things. That way you can escape attachment.

"The books say that a woman has eight times more lust than a man. If it be so, it is perhaps due to her being dependent on man. She has to please her husband; and having no other means, she takes to that alone. Once I mentioned this to an American lady. She flared up and said: 'It is men who force us to such things. They are the least spiritual.'

"Once in America, a lady came to see me. I at once divined her mind and asked her if she had anything to tell me. She was very glad that I understood her. I took her aside. She told me that her husband was very sensual, but she herself had not the least inclination for that sort of life. She said: 'I allow my husband freedom to go to whomsoever he likes; only let him not trouble me.' To that I replied: 'You are very nice! You started life together, and now you want to drive him away! Live with him and try to reform him by your advice.' She burst out crying at my words,—she understood. And though for a time they lived together, she could not hold on to the last, she separated, but never married again.

"In America men work very hard; they necessarily seek enjoyment in reaction. And they have no other idea of enjoyment than that. Hence it is that they are so excessively lustful. The women labour less and are more intellectual. Therefore perhaps they have less of the sex impulse.

"There, I was once repeatedly sent for by a woman. She was the mistress of a man who was a perfect rogue

and would not allow her to go out. She begged me earnestly to go and see her once. She persuaded the man to allow my visit. He agreed on the express understanding that the interview would take place in his presence. He sat a little apart, and the woman came out of her room and shook hands with me. I stood up, and holding her by the hand for about five minutes, I *willed* that her mind be purified and have pure tendencies. We then sat down side by side and chatted for sometime without minding the least the man. The man became furious and exclaimed: 'You should know this is America.' 'What of that?' I said, 'I know it is America.' The effect of this visit was astonishing. The woman overcame his influence and having extricated herself from his hold, went and lived apart. She had said after the handshake: 'I am filled, my difficulties are solved. I feel that I am pure, I have known what woman is.'

"The Lord endows religious teachers with a special power which descends through the succession of disciples. Or why, if they are only like common men, should people seek them? It is to do His own work that He so endows the preachers. But if they utilise the power for selfish purposes, they are deprived of it. Other powers such as oratory and the like may remain, but the saving power departs from them."

To a question, the Swami replied: "Yes, the power survives even the completion of the work for which God granted it. Only it wanes a little. But by misuse it is completely lost. Oh the tremendous will power I used to feel then! It is all His wondrous play!"

He quoted from the sixth chapter of the Gita, interspersing the recitation with beautiful and illuminating comments:

" 'Having in a cleanly spot established his seat,—firm, neither too high nor low, made of a cloth, a skin and Kusha grass, arranged in consecution,—and having seated on that seat, making the mind one-pointed and subduing the action of the imagining faculty and the senses, let him practise Yoga for the purification of the heart.' 'Through

whatever reason, the restless, unsteady mind wanders away, let him, curbing it from that, bring it under the subjugation of the Self alone.'

"With unflagging perseverance the mind must be again and again brought back to the Atman. It is the nature of the mind to be fickle and restless, like a naughty child that has to be pulled back by the ear to its studies. The mind must be carried even beyond the Buddhi, the determinative faculty, directly to the Atman. Of course, repeated and incessant efforts are necessary, but at last the mind will come under your control and remain calmly fixed on the Atman. At first you are to transcend Tamas, then Rajas, and finally you are to go beyond even Sattwa itself. Then you realise the Self as pervading everything. You find that He alone exists, nothing else. And that is called the state of Transcendental Consciousness.

"The senses, the mind and the intellect,—we shall have to capture all these outposts of consciousness, and thereby conquer lust. Lust, anger and avarice, these are but different forms of the same thing. They are the eternal enemies of the Jnani and destroyers of knowledge and wisdom.

"Join the senses to the Lord: the eyes shall see His image only, and whatever has to be eaten, must be His Prasad. That is the way to teach the senses their right lesson.

"Medicine is doing me little good. The fact is I am fulfilling my own Karma, and when that will end, this body also will perish."

D—referred to the stories of Sri Ramakrishna bringing about sudden transformations in the lives of drunkards and characterless men. At that the Swami said: "Yes, these are all true. To some, however, he would allow an interval, as to Girish Babu. 'Enjoy yourself,' he would say to him, 'you won't croak long now that you have been bitten by a poisonous serpent.' There is the story of Suresh Babu, long after he had known Sri Ramakrishna, being tempted one evening, on his way from his office, to visit a public woman. He went upstairs and entered

the woman's room. But lo, there was no woman, but Sri Ramakrishna himself standing there ! In great shame, he fled from the place."

This reminded the Swami of the episode of Jaimini and Vyasa : "Jaimini, as a precaution, had warned the girl that the place was haunted by a ghost, and she must on no account open the door, even though the voice calling her might be his own. Thus it was that though he, in his passion, entreated her to admit him into her room, the door never opened. All night he stood sleepless at the door, and in the morning he found no girl but Vyasadeva himself within the room.

"If you touch the Atman, you are safe."

#### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Those who read newspapers and keep abreast with the current of world-events might have heard about the famous trial of Tennessee, U. S. A. It has created quite a stir and sensation all over the civilised world and has become a topic of the day. It has given a rude shock to the sentiments of all scientists and of those who advocate the freedom of thought and opinion. In these days of scientific advancement and the progress of democratic and liberal ideas, it is not only astounding but extremely deplorable that a school teacher should be arrested and convicted on a charge of teaching children the theory of evolution that forms one of the corner-stones of modern science. The long and short of the case is as follows : Mr. John Scopes, the accused, who fell a victim to the fanaticism and bigotry of an orthodox section of the Christian church, was a teacher in a high school at Dayton, a town in the Tennessee state. He was prosecuted on the grounds that he used a text-book called 'A Civic Biology' that deals among others with the theory of evolution. Taking advantage of a preposterous law of the state which nobody thought would ever be enforced like many other dead

letter laws, the fundamentalists, that conservative section of Christians who consider the Bible to be a revelation and as such every word of it to be literally true, prosecuted the innocent school teacher. There was the farce of a trial in a court of law, and the man was found guilty and fined 100 dollars.

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Before we enter into any academical discussion as to the scientific and philosophical validity of the doctrine of evolution, what strikes us most is that this trial is one of those instances that are a menace to the freedom of men. For, this trial betrays a spirit that will not allow a man to think independently and give expression to his ideas. It proves conclusively that a man is not safe if his ways of thinking happen to differ from the accepted notions. And if he persists in presenting things that are strange and thus not palatable to many—at least the influential majority, he will have a bad time of it. Does not this forebode a very bad future for original research and thinking? So far as we understand, freedom is the primary condition of growth. But for it development, individual and collective, is sure to become stunted. Every unit of a social organism must be given the legitimate scope to grow, of course not in violation of the general health of the system as a whole. Otherwise, there is every chance that the organism itself will become diseased and atrophied. A state entrusted with the welfare of its citizens should not curb the freedom of individuals, if this freedom does not prove to be positively injurious. It should rather see that all its individual members get full opportunities for a free expression of their respective talents. Sometimes it may happen that a man will come out who will appear abnormal in his views and opinions. But that is no reason why he should not be encouraged and allowed to have his own way. He may differ from the majority. But who knows that what he wants to propound and present before society is not correct and beneficial? Only time can prove that.

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Perhaps the students of sociology will agree when we say that the mass mind is generally conservative and is lazy to move save in its old grooves. Hence it rebels at anything that seems to be new to it. Thus there has always been a war between the genius and the multitude, in which the former being in the minority has often had to suffer an apparent defeat at the outset. Let us look at the pages of history for the illustration of our point. We find there copious instances of intellectual and spiritual giants who have been flouted, persecuted and even put to death, because of their special messages which the people were not ready to accept at the time. Socrates, the wisest man of his times, was made to drink the fatal cup of hemlock, because he promulgated doctrines that were much ahead of his age. Galileo, the great scientist, was compelled to withdraw his statement that the earth is not stationary but moves round the sun. Copernicus, the celebrated astronomer, had to run for his life for stating some scientific truths which were unintelligible to his contemporaries. Columbus was hooted out as a madman by the Council of Padua 'for pretending that it is possible to circumnavigate the globe.' Above all, Jesus, the Nazarene, the founder of Christianity, was crucified by his countrymen for his divine message. We need not multiply instances. What we have already cited will be enough to show the psychology of the generality of people. They lack in breadth of vision and proceed at a snail's pace in their ideas. They cannot tolerate others who seem to be peculiar to them. But as it has always happened, truth under all circumstances is bound to triumph in the end. Nothing on earth can thwart its progress. As it is impossible to cover the rays of the blazing sun by the palm of one's hand, truth cannot be suppressed. Against countless odds it will have its way and shine by its own light illumining everything that falls on its path. Hence if there be any truth in the message of a genius, it cannot be lost by any temporary check or persecution. Perhaps it will gain all the more by the very sufferings and sacrifice of its master and overcome all difficulties.



Orthodoxy, bigotry and superstition had their days in the past in the dark ages. Now at this twentieth century when we are at the height of civilisation, culture and scientific progress, one naturally expects that they will have less sway over the minds of the people. But the Tennessee case, implying as it does an organised attempt to obstruct individual growth by putting all sorts of meaningless conventions and dogmas as barriers in the paths of young people receiving education in schools, has belied our expectation. It shows that even a progressive country like America has not as yet been able to free herself of ecclesiastical fanatics who taking advantage of the influential position they hold in the state, are exploiting the credulity of the ignorant people by asking them to believe all sorts of dogmas that have no scientific basis. Of course, the party, viz. the fundamentalists, who are responsible for the introduction of the preposterous law at Tennessee and the prosecution of the school master, have their own arguments, however plausible and specious, to justify their conduct. The doctrine of evolution, they say, is a theory that goes against the teachings of the Bible and is thus inimical to the religion preached by Jesus. Now, if it is taught in schools, children will learn to question the inerrancy of the Bible and refuse to take every word of it as gospel truth without due examination and critical analysis. It will in this way undermine the very foundation of Christianity. Christian schools maintained by Christian tax-payers have no right to train Christian boys and girls into heretics. Thus do the fundamentalists plead their cause.

But what does the theory of evolution say, and how is it in conflict with the Bible? According to it, the present world with all the varieties of plant and animal species it contains is the result of a slow process of development covering a period of millions of years and has not been made as it is all at once. And this process has been on the whole from lower to higher, from homo-

geneous to heterogeneous, from inorganic to organic, from lifeless to living, forms. Thus interpreted, man who may be called the acme of the evolutionary process and the highest manifestation of life and consciousness, is not made in the image of God, complete and full-grown, but has come to be what he is from a crude state. As a species, perhaps, he has for his immediate ancestor the monkey or the anthropoid ape. This doctrine of the gradual genesis of the world and the species of living creatures inhabiting it contradicts the theory of special creation as given in the Bible, according to which everything, lifeless or living, has been fashioned by the Almighty as it is all at once out of nothing. The Biblical representation of a series of special acts of creation being contradicted, the whole system of doctrines built on the fall of Adam and Eve, the first ancestors of man, is destroyed. The fundamentalists argue: "No fall, no real problem of sin; no sin, no need of salvation; no salvation, no Divine Redeemer; and so no Christianity." Hence it is that the fundamentalists, eager to hold their own position, are up in arms against the evolutionists.



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The idea of this world being manufactured out of nothing all at once is neither scientific nor philosophically tenable. Although there is a difference of opinion as to the details of the theory of evolution, almost all scientists agree that the history of the world is a history of a slow and gradual development. Evidences of this are to be found in the structure of the earth and the remains of extinct species of plants and animals which had appeared on earth and lived for ages, but died out being supplanted by more highly organised types. A vast period of time must have elapsed before this earth and its inhabitants could attain their present forms. The condensation of the suns and planets, the cooling and hardening of the earth into a solid sphere, the formation of the earth's surface into mountains, valleys, rivers, seas and oceans, and the appearance and disappearance of the different species of

plants and animals—all these changes that are supposed to have taken place are possible only if we recognise a slow process of evolution going on for a long period of time. As it is not within our province, we shall leave this scientific aspect of the question to experts and consider next the philosophical validity of the theory of evolution as distinguished from the crude conception of the doctrine of special creation.



*Ex nihilo nihil fit*—is a logical dictum full of sense. It means that something cannot come out of nothing. A positive entity cannot have void for its cause. The law of causation which governs the phenomenal world requires that every effect must have a cause. A causeless effect or an accident that we loosely use for a phenomenon whose origin cannot be traced, is a chimera. It has no place in the economy of nature. It has neither subjective nor objective existence. Thus understood what we call an effect is nothing but the cause reproduced. In other words, what was at first involved as a cause becomes evolved as an effect. The huge oak, with its big trunk, spreading branches and innumerable leaves that can give shelter to thousands of people under its shade, was present in a subtle form in the acorn. It has nothing in it that was not in the acorn, though this fact may appear physically impossible to a man of ordinary understanding. Not only is this law of causation applicable to individual cases, it holds equally good collectively to species and to the group of phenomena called the world. This world that is a conglomeration of manifold types of plants and animals is, collectively speaking, a product and must therefore have a cause from which it has evolved step by step. To say that it has come out of nothing is to deny an axiomatic truth the validity of which cannot be doubted even as the fact that 2 plus 2 makes 4.



Besides, there is a strong theological proof in support of the theory of evolution. Let us take for example the

human race. It contains individuals of such varied types and grades of mental and spiritual growth that it becomes inexplicable unless we bring in the doctrine of Karma and the law of gradual progress. How are we to account for the fact that one man is a saint and another a scoundrel, one an intellectual prodigy and another an idiot, one miserable and another happy? To say that this differentiation is all due to the sweet will and caprice of God, the Creator, is no answer. If you make God responsible for this differentiation, He becomes an imperfect God, guilty of partiality and inequality of treatment, and all the attributes of supreme love, truth, justice etc. that we apply to Him become meaningless. Such a God is no better than a human autocrat ruling by whims and as such is not an ideal worth striving for. Under the rule of such a God there will be a regular anarchy. No man will have any faith in the moral and spiritual laws, and the ascendancy of the forces of evil will make this world a hell. The doctrine of Karma which is nothing but an aspect of the law of causation satisfactorily explains this differentiation as no other theory does. Every man is the architect of his own present state as well as of his future. By good Karma, perhaps done in previous lives, a saint has simply unfolded the saintly potentialities that he had. He is not a freak of nature or an accident. All these proofs go to invalidate the theory of special creation.

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But can we not interpret the Bible in a different light, so as to make it consistent with the accepted principles of science? The words of the Bible, we think, need not be taken literally, giving equal emphasis upon everything that it contains. Like all other scriptures it has essentials and non-essentials, eternal truths and changing forms and dogmas, fundamental principles of morality and religion as well as mythologies. Thus one portion of it is infallible and useful for all times, the other is not so. Like all other literatures, revealed or man-made, the Bible has passed through a process of evolution. For, in it

we find so many things that cannot otherwise be reconciled and put together consistently. The primitive picture of the ancient Hebrew traditions, the ethical doctrines of the prophets, the religion of temple and sacrifice, the sublime message of Jesus, the elaborate theology as promulgated by St. Paul, Christianity as represented in the fourth gospel and so forth—all these occur there. It is impossible to combine all these into a systematic whole unless we recognise that the Bible is a complex literature that has issued out of the long development of the Hebrew and Christian religions, having in it elements varying from the naive, grotesque and crude forms of worship and ritual to the superb life and teachings of Jesus.



The life and teachings of Jesus may be said to be the highest fulfilment of the Bible and are the foundations on which has been built the superstructure called Christianity. Hence by Christianity is meant, truly speaking, that great ethical religion which may be summed up as the practice of those cardinal virtues, which is essential to a strictly moral and spiritual life, and it is exemplified in the unique personality of Jesus. It consists, in other words, in realising our perfect nature by a true knowledge of our place and function in the world-order and our relation to God, the Heavenly Father. The God preached by Jesus is not a *deus ex machina*, for He is our very life and essence. "In Him we live and move and have our being." The anthropomorphic idea of an extra-cosmic God creating this world out of nothing by a single act of volition and ruling His creatures by rewards and punishments, as it occurs in the Book of Genesis, cannot be fathered upon Christianity. It is noticeable that in the New Testament there has been a regular evolution of the idea of God from a crude deism to panentheism, and this panentheism means that God is immanent and at the same time transcendent. "I and the Father are one"—says Christ. This statement clearly indicates a relation subsisting between

God and ourselves which may be called unity in variety. Hence not only is it possible with regard to Christ, the chosen man of God, it can be realised by every one of us in a supreme state of blessedness and communion. "Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect," says the Bible. It signifies that perfection that we are to attain to is our birthright. It is our essence, the very part and parcel of our life. Not that something extra will be superadded to us when we shall be perfect, but there will be an unfoldment of our real nature, which is veiled by ignorance. This is what we understand by Christianity.

The time has come when religion should shake hands with science in a spirit of fellowship. The feeling of enmity and quarrel that has created to-day a yawning gulf separating the one from the other must give way to one of mutual confidence, and they should unite as friends and help each other towards the realisation of a common end which is Truth. So far as we understand, the whole conflict is due to a misconception that is bound to disappear with a better knowledge and understanding of each other's function and province. Though there may be a difference as to their methods, both science and religion, it may be proved, aim at one thing, viz. Truth. The goal that religion places before us is, truly speaking, not different from the final conclusion arrived at by science. They are but different views of the same thing from different perspectives. The recent discoveries of science establishing the unity of life and consciousness and the existence of one Ultimate Principle permeating the whole universe conclusively prove what we say. When the Vedic seers declared with a voice of thunder that the Reality is one, and It is Absolute Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, they simply foreshadowed by their intuitive vision the final synthesis of science yet to be made. Hence what we want to emphasise is that no religion which is based upon a rational basis and is progressive and liberal

has any reason to be afraid of science. It is only the dogmatic and hide-bound religion of the church and the temple that considers itself to be at stake and raises a false note of alarm at the progress of science.

## PRACTICAL VEDANTA.\*

BY SWAMI SHARVANANDA.

श्लोकाद्धेन प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

—“What has been spoken in volumes, I shall express in half a verse : Brahman alone is true, the phenomenal world is false, and the Jiva or the individual soul is no other than Brahman.” Thus did one of our ancient sages put in a nutshell the entire truth of the Vedanta philosophy. You may say that it is easy to declare in so many words the unreality of this world and the reality of a strange entity called Brahman, but to the majority of people Brahman is only a word having no significance in life. For, it is unknown and unknowable to them, whereas the world of phenomena which is said to have no permanence is so very real and tangible, yielding the satisfaction of the senses. The aforesaid statement of Vedanta is thus against the evidence of direct experience. It is something like asking one to believe a thing which one does not see to exist and to deny the existence of that which one does actually see or feel. In reply the scriptures will say that this is the Truth, nay the only Truth, though hard to realise. “The path to realisation is as perilous as walking upon the sharp edge of a razor blade.” One among millions succeeds and gets a vision of the Ideal after countless births of strenuous Sadhana. As the Lord Sri Krishna says in the Gita—“One, perchance in thousands of men, strives for perfection ; one,

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\* Notes of a lecture delivered in Bombay.

perchance among the blessed few who strive, knows Me in reality."

It is a fact of common experience that this world which we consider to be so real cannot give us any permanent satisfaction or joy. In this big city of Bombay which has got a population of about eleven lacs of men and women, if you go from house to house and ask individually every inmate whether he is happy—whether he is perfectly satisfied with his life, I dare say you will not get half a dozen people who would say 'Yes.' Almost everyone has something to complain of and being dissatisfied with his present position is trying to improve his lot, so that he may be happy. Happiness, pure and unmixed, is indeed very rare in this world. Earthly objects that contribute to our pleasure are short-lived and evanescent. As it is, how can we say that this worldly life will have an abiding interest for man? Only that may be said to have a permanent value which lasts through eternity and does not undergo any change or modification at any time. The human mind naturally wants something which remains unchanged in this world of flux, which endures while all other things go to decay. This Unchanged Reality is what we call Brahman or Truth by realising which we can transcend the limitations of the phenomenal life and attain Immortality.

While speaking of the truth of Vedanta, of course I mean Adwaita Vedanta, I believe it is the culmination of human knowledge and aspiration. Beyond that we cannot go or hope to go. Not only is it theoretically the rationale of all philosophy, it is also extremely practical, for it comes within the scope of direct experience. That Brahman alone is real and the world false is a matter not of mere intellectual interest but of actual realisation. There may be persons who are well-versed in the Vedantic lore and can establish to others the Vedantic doctrine by the force of arguments. But it is all useless unless one lives the actual life. Intellectually it may be easy to grasp the truths of the Vedanta philosophy, but to make them the part and parcel of our life is very difficult. This is why



a systematic course of intense Sadhana or spiritual discipline is necessary. What happens ordinarily is that when the subconscious mind is not tinged with the same hue as that of the conscious mind, a particular thought cannot have any lasting effect upon our practical life. Many of us are conscious of this truth, but cannot bring the Ideal to bear upon our actual life, because the impressions that are latent in our subconscious mind-stuff are too strong for us to overcome. It is Sadhana by means of which we can hope to do it. Sadhana is the process by which the entire mind, conscious or subconscious, can be brought within our control and directed towards the realisation of the Ideal.

The Vedanta prescribes a fourfold course of Sadhana to be gone through systematically under the guidance of an able teacher who has got the Illumination. First is the practice of dispassion and renunciation of enjoyment, here and hereafter. It is the desire for enjoyment that takes us away from the Ideal and makes us run for temporal things. We want what is pleasing to our senses, we seek wealth, we long for name and fame, and we look forward to a happy, enjoyable life after death. But all these, however attractive, are vanities ; they cannot give us permanent satisfaction which is obtainable only in the unchangeable Brahman. It is a truth that darkness and light cannot live together. If you want light, you must give up darkness. If you want to go to the east, you must recede from the west. In a cinematograph you must withdraw your gaze from the moving pictures if you want to have a full idea of the background that holds the shifting scenes. Similarly, in the spiritual life the renunciation of desire, the root-cause of all mental distractions, is essential, and one cannot renounce unless there be a dispassion for the objects of desire.

The second course is the practice of discrimination of the Real from what is unreal. It is essential in order to strengthen our dispassion. Many get disgusted with life when they get hard blows from nature in the shape of trials and difficulties, misfortunes and bereave-

ments. They then feel that this world with all its wealth of enjoyment is shallow and worthless and cannot give them the strength and peace they stand most in need of. But this feeling will not be lasting until and unless it were established on a clear conception of what is permanent and what is impermanent. It often happens that the mother loses all her interest for the world and becomes disconsolate when her dearest child is snatched away by the cruel hand of death. But this grief and dispassion pass away in course of time, and she seems to forget everything and reconciling herself to her lot reverts to the worldly ways.

The third course consists in the practice of the six ethical virtues of mental equanimity, self-control and so forth. Balance is essential to the disciplining of the mind which is so restless and wayward in its nature. We should try to remain unruffled under all circumstances, in pain or pleasure, misery or happiness. We lose our mental equipoise and feel miserable or happy, because we identify ourselves with our body and the environment with which we are surrounded. The mental balance requires a full restraint of the senses which have a natural tendency to go out and create distraction. What makes a man different from a brute is this virtue of self-control. Of all animals it is man who has the power to curb his senses and engage them as he wills. Therein lies his speciality. But it cannot be denied that the majority of mankind have become dehumanised by becoming slaves to their passions and allowing their senses to lead them as they like. This internal slavery is worse than physical bondage, for it is more painful. Next comes the practice of forbearance. So long as we are in this world, we cannot avoid unpleasant or adverse circumstances. They upset us and make our life miserable unless we put up with them and struggle calmly and patiently for the realisation of the Ideal. Along with the practice of forbearance we must also have the virtue of withdrawing the mind from external objects and fixing it on the Ideal. The mind of an ordinary sense-bound man is full of dross and

impurity ; it cannot reflect the Truth until and unless it is made pure. We cannot see the bottom of a lake if its water is turbid and its surface is agitated by waves. The sixth ethical virtue is *Sraddha* or faith in the words of the Guru and the scriptures . I think I need not speak much to you on the importance of *Sraddha* in spiritual life, for it is one of the greatest requisites for the realisation of the Ideal. The position of a sceptic who questions his Guru or the authority of the scriptures at every step is miserable. He has none to show him the path ; he stumbles and fails to reach the Goal.

The last course is the desire for emancipation. Everyone is more or less instinctively conscious of his bondage from his very birth. That is why he cries when he sees the light of day, and as he grows in years he complains when he is put under any restraint. Freedom is the birth-right of man, and he wants to be free in all ways. But as he often does not know the right channel, he goes here and there and suffers till at last experience and the longing for freedom bring him round to the real path. We must intensify this hankering after liberation and struggle to get beyond the pale of ignorance which is at the root of all evil. As I have said, mere intellectual knowledge will not help. We must undergo the course of *Sadhana*—the fourfold spiritual discipline, of which the desire for emancipation is the primary requisite for making the Vedantic ideal real in life.

The Vedanta philosophy demands that it should be practised in life along with a theoretical knowledge of it. Herein lies the difference between the Indian and Western systems of thought. The latter is merely of speculative interest and tries to establish truth by force of intellect or reason. But man's reason as such is limited like his body ; so how can one expect to grasp the Unlimited by means of what is limited? It is therefore that philosophers like Kant, Herbert Spencer and others who followed the path of reason have reached an adamant wall which they could not cross and see the Reality behind. Nowadays a new school of thought has come to the forefront

in the West, I mean the school inaugurated by Bergson, the French philosopher, who has brought the doctrine of intuition in the domain of philosophy.

But we must say even Bergson with his theory of intuition is not very explicit. His intuition is simply a finer modification of feeling or emotion and can only see things directly as such and do nothing more. It works under all the limitations as the reason does. Let us see what Bergson has to say on the subject. If you take all the possible photographs of Bombay and arrange them in a panoramic way, the series of pictures would not be Bombay itself. Similarly, the senses bring impressions from the external world, and the mind like a negative plate receives them. The universe we know of is simply a representation and not the Reality, however faithful it may be. The Reality to be truly perceived must be seen through a different faculty of the human mind which is intuition. The Reality being dynamic cannot come within the cognizance of the intellect which can only grasp things static in nature. It is the inner power of intuition that can see the Reality in its dynamic aspect. This is the sum and substance of Bergson's theory of intuition, and it is faulty and imperfect. Intuition if it be a modification of the mind cannot even give us a glimpse of what lies beyond mind—the consciousness itself. In order to realise that one must transcend mind and the categories of time, space and causation. It is not knowing but being and becoming where the individual and the Universal become one, and the duality of subject and object becomes annulled in the indivisible consciousness, called Samadhi. This supra-conscious state that will lead us to the realisation of Brahman is not an Utopian ideal. It has been realised in the past and can be verified to the letter here and now by any one whose mind has been perfectly disciplined and purified by a regular course of Sadhana as prescribed by the scriptures. Let us try to have that glorious state, and we shall get peace and blessedness that passeth all understanding.

# THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT.

BY SWAMI ADWAITANANDA.

## II

The rebirth of the soul of India into a new national body must insist on the spiritual motive in every sphere of activity. Spirituality does not certainly mean that we shall regard mundane life as vanity, nor does it mean that the whole of the national mind will be moulded into a uniform shape. It does not mean belief in particular dogmas, or the observance of definite forms of worship. Such an attempt would be quite impossible in a country full of the most diverse religious opinions and harbouring three such varied general forms as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Spirituality is much wider than any particular religion, and all religions are, really speaking, but sects of the one eternal religion which consists in the perception of the Divine within us. Further, real spirituality does not exclude anything whatsoever from its all-embracing fold. It gives free activity to reason, to science and philosophy, to the full satisfaction of the æsthetic being, to the health and vigour of the body, to the material well-being of man, to opulence, ease and comfort. Bareness and squalor are not the indispensable accompaniments of spirituality. They betray, on the contrary, a sad lack of that precious commodity. Nor is military, political and social subservience compatible with genuine spirituality. Freedom means all-sided freedom, mental and physical.

There is a world of difference between the spiritual and the purely mental view of existence. The spiritual view holds that the mind and the body are the instruments of the Self, for Self-expression. It holds that the goal of life is the attainment of spotless freedom which consists in Self-realisation by self-transcendence. It does not look upon the development of mind and body as the

final aim of man. This changes the whole outlook of man ; and although it preserves all the mundane aims of life, it gives them a different value and puts them in their proper places.

Spirituality aims at the full development of mental, emotional and æsthetic parts of man, because they too are the expressions of the Spirit, and by neglecting them it neglects the Spirit in manifestation. From a spiritual point of view philosophy and science are but different ways of approach to the same Reality, from two opposite poles of our being. It does not stop at mere intellectual beliefs, although they may be completely satisfying. It uses philosophy and science as helps and goes far beyond them. It aims at the full health and vigour of the body, but does so, because it is part of the Dharma of the complete human living. The body is the basis for the discovery and expression of the Divine in man. The primitive aim of art and poetry is to create realistic images of man and nature, but spiritually they become expressions of the deepest reality and of universal beauty. Politics, society and economy, from a spiritual point of view, become a frame work for the growth of the life within and an external embodiment of the law of spiritual being.

Europe is slowly but surely awakening to the idea that a mere rationalistic culture has no definite aim. It is taking in the Eastern ideas which are penetrating into her mentality, and trying to apply them to her conditions. It does not forswear science, democracy and progress, but aims at perfecting them by the light of this new knowledge. We too should be faithful to our traditions, and while receiving with open arms all that is best in Western culture should take care to see that our characteristic tendency and mode of thought are not abandoned. India can develop herself best and serve humanity by following scrupulously the law of her own nature. Religion means following the spiritual impulse in its fullness, seeing God everywhere, deifying everything, raising life in all its parts

to the divinest possible values. If we attach this meaning to the word religion, we shall find that there is not too much but too little of religion in this country. We have to give to the agelong ideal of India a wider field, a more synthetic meaning, so that each and every activity of the nation, each and every mode of expression, each and every noble and unifying motive becomes religion, and the whole life, internal and external, assumes the form of the manifestation of the national soul. The philosophy, poetry, art and science of the West are going in this direction more or less obscurely. India has the central key with her. She knows what spirituality is. She has got a clear conception of the goal, and she knows the ways and means of reaching it. She has only to undergo the necessary discipline on a more general scale and give a wider and a more comprehensive application to her ancient ideal, and she can be the light of the world and lead it out of the present mental chaos. This is her special mission. Her current literature, her religious and philosophical movements, and her art clearly indicate that the Indian mind has begun to realise the nature of its special function—the enlightenment of humanity on the ways and means of the attainment of freedom from the thralldom of matter.

## MAHATMA GANDHI.

BY AN ADMIRER.

The Editor of the Prabuddha Bharata has laid upon the present writer the duty of writing out some reflections concerning Mahatma Gandhi. To release himself from this onerous responsibility all sorts of loopholes and excuses have been exhausted, and as the Editor remains adamant in his original command, there is no alternative left but to do the best in one's power. There are many obvious reasons for the diffidence. In the first place, to understand contemporary men and events in a dis-

passionate way is rarely, if ever at all, successfully accomplished, for these persons are themselves actors or at best interested spectators. Still more difficult is the task of weighing men's motives and achievements and pronounce judgments upon their worth. In the second place, if the personalities under discussion are of such a type as to be unique, complex and too far above the normal, as is that of the Mahatma, one might more easily hope for success in the accomplishment of the classical impossibles beginning with the attempt to extract oil out of sand, and so forth.

When we consider the opinions and judgments on the Mahatma by responsible critics, both Indian and Western, we find that they are extremely varied and conflicting. To illustrate our point we shall just refer to some of these. Some regard him as 'a knight of the impossible,' 'a beautiful but ineffectual angel beating his luminous wings in the void in vain,' 'a dangerous force playing with fire,' 'a faddist trying to imitate the prophet of old and bid the sun of progress stop in its course and go back.' One Governor of a British province in the East calls him 'a dangerous and misguided saint.' An American magazine describes him as 'a monk who imperils British rule in India.' Another looks upon him as 'one of the great *might-have-beens* of Indian history.' This is, of course, one side of the picture. Let us look at the other. The Lord Bishop of Madras speaks thus of Mahatmaji: "I see in Mr. Gandhi the patient sufferer for the cause of righteousness and mercy, a truer representative of the Crucified Saviour than the men who have thrown him into prison and yet call themselves by the name of Christ." Dr. Annie Besant, once a declared opponent of Mahatmaji's movement, writes: "Among us, as I write, is dwelling for a brief space one whose presence is a benediction, and whose feet sanctify every house into which he enters—Gandhi, our martyr and saint. \* \* \* As I stood for a moment facing him, hand clasped in hand, I saw in him that deathless spirit which redeems by suffering and in death wins life for others, one of those marked out for



the high service of becoming saviours and helpers of humanity." The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Sastri observes : "His compassion and tenderness are infinite. The present writer stood by as he wiped the sores of a leper with the ends of his own garment. It is his complete mastery of the passions, his realisation of the ideal of a Sannyasin in all the rigour of its Eastern conception which has crowned him with the title of Mahatma or the 'Great Soul.' " The same writer says further on : "The writer of these lines is not one of Mr. Gandhi's political followers or a disciple of his in religion. But he claims to have known him for some years and to have been a sympathetic student of his teachings. He has felt when near him the chastening effects of a great personality. He has derived much strength from observing the workings of an iron will. He has learned from a living example something of the nature of Duty and the worship due to her. He has occasionally caught some dim perception of the great things that lie hidden below the surface and of the struggles and tribulations which invest life with its awe and grandeur. An ancient Sanskrit verse says : 'Do not tell me of holy waters, of stone images ; they may cleanse us if they do after a long period. A saintly person purifies us at sight'." Everyone is familiar with the famous sermons of the Rev. J. H. Holmes on Mahatmajī, in one of which he says : "When I think of Gandhi, I think of Jesus Christ. He lives his life, he speaks his word ; he suffers, strives and will some day nobly die for his kingdom upon earth." In the course of a sermon after the arrest of the Mahatma he says : "Does not this prove him to be the Christ of our age? To-day, as in the olden times, it is no longer a question as to whether Christ is here or not. It is a question of who will recognise and follow." The sweet singer of India, Srimati Sarojini Devi writes thus : "Let us not follow the conventional mode of the world and wait for a man to be dead to canonise him ; but rather let our critical judgment confirm the unerring instinct of the people that recognises in Mahatma Gandhi a linical descendant of those great sons of compassion who became

the servants of humanity—Gautama Buddha, Chaitanya, Ramanuja, Ramakrishna. He lacks, may be, the breadth and height and ecstasy of their mystical attainment ; but he is not less than them in his intensity of love, his sincerity of service and a lofty simplicity of life which is the austere flower of his renunciation and self-sacrifice."

These are testimonies from persons whom all the world knows and respects, and who could by no means be considered prejudiced in his favour and called blind admirers. And they are enough to give one an idea of the vast complexity and the remarkable greatness of the personality of the Mahatma. After so much has been said on the subject, it would be as superfluous and foolish as to 'paint the lilies and colour the rainbow' to go about proving how closely the Mahatma answers to the definition of a 'Great Soul.' Nor is it necessary to discuss Mahatmaji's personal conviction and achievements in Ahimsa or non-violence which is the first article of his faith as well as the last article of his creed. It may be said that to him Ahimsa is not merely the negative virtue of not injuring any living being, whether in mind, speech or body, but it stands for the largest love and the greatest charity, necessarily implying truth and fearlessness. This love is identical with truth and is a dynamic power of the soul. He often repeats: "God is, even though the world deny Him. Truth stands even though there be no public support. It is self-sustained." His religion "is not formal religion or customary religion, but that which underlies all religions—a religion which brings man face to face with his Master." Perhaps, some wise readers would observe that all these are taught by our Sanatana Dharma, and for the matter of that by all the great religions of the world ! Quite true ! But they are only taught and seldom put in practice. The beauty of the life of the Mahatma lies in the fact that he applies these most rigorously to the details of everyday conduct and even to politics, in which field all the commandments of God—to judge by the actions of the statesmen and rulers of the civilised world—are not recognised at all, and if ever recognised are either

broken without any scruple or blandished forth to hood-wink the unwary.

Mahatmaji speaks of himself thus: "Most religious men are politicians in disguise. I, however, who wear the guise of a politician, am at heart a religious man." When he once accepts a principle, he will not yield an inch even to his dearest friends and not even when forced with the alternative of extreme unpopularity and a complete desertion by all his adherents. This much cannot be said of any public man or statesman of the past or in the present day. To what an extent he can carry his principles into practice is well illustrated by the following incident. When the late Mr. Gokhale was his guest in South Africa, the Mahatma insisted upon doing all the menial tasks including even that of sweeping, and when it was suggested that somebody else might be given the task the reply he gave was typical of his attitude. He said that regarding any piece of work which had to be done, there was no highness or lowness about it, and if any work was thought to be too dirty for him (Gandhi), it should be regarded equally dirty and low even for any poor sweeper who was just as much a human being as he himself. Similarly in the case of the removal of untouchability, long before he began to preach it to the public, he adopted as his own daughter the Pariah girl Lakshmi, and it is well-known how even in the Yerrowada prison, almost the first question he would be asking of the visitor was—'How Lakshmi is doing?' Regarding his extreme sense of duty, we are told, that during his serious illness some years ago, his youngest son, who was then at Madras entrusted with the duty of the Hindi Prachar, went to the Satyagraha Ashrama in his natural anxiety and eagerness to meet the father. And how was he treated? He was rebuked for deserting his post of duty and immediately ordered to go back and take up the task. Whether the boy actually went back to Madras or not, it is at least characteristic of Mahatmaji to say so.

An incident illustrative of the extreme coolness and presence of mind of the Mahatma is that when a cobra

fell upon him, he not only remained unmoved but asked others round him to do the same, and no wonder that the creature too quietly passed away. We have also heard people say as to what length he would carry his faith in Ahimsa. In the Ashrama, for example, if any inmate or member went wrong, far from punishing him what he would do was to pray, do penance, suffer and punish himself with the consequence that no member could dream of committing mistakes. Even if something untoward happened, the erring member would so entreat his 'Bapuji' or 'Father' (so he is affectionately called in the Ashrama and in most parts of Gujerat too) not to punish himself or prescribe some penance. There are so many such stories current about him, but space forbids any detailed recapitulation of them all here. We have simply contented ourselves by referring to a few only, and they reveal the most humane and soft sides of his wonderful personality.

How simple, natural and unaffected is Mahatmaji's conduct at all times can be judged from the following. The famous ultimatum to the Viceroy was being discussed at a meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress. The clock struck 5 p.m. which was his supper time. So all on a sudden with a sweet smile for an apology that the members might not mind it, he had his simple and frugal fare of a few slices of bread and goat's milk, and finishing that he resumed his discussion of the ultimatum. With one more and perhaps the crowning piece we must bring to a close these personal touches. It was a few months after the Nagpur Session of the Congress, where the capturing of the local bodies was adopted as one of the items of the programme. In the municipal elections of an important city in Gujerat, the non-co-operators captured as many as 80 per cent. of the seats, and the local leaders wanted to consult the Mahatma and take his advice as to what should be done. Forthwith a deputation of half a dozen of prominent leaders started for the Satyagraha Ashrama and reached the place in due time. It was early morning, and they learnt that 'Bapuji' was

in the gymnasium of the school with the boys. The leaders in their eagerness would not wait, and they marched on there. What a sight! The man who is recognised as one of the greatest personalities of the world, the Dictator of the Indian National Congress, was found sitting and playing on the sand surrounded by a group of tiny children, who not only took him to be one of their own but seemed so delighted and charmed with him as to forget all about the outside world. Most picturesque was the scene of a little urchin perched on the shoulders of the Mahatma. As soon as the leaders entered the sacred place, they were greeted by a sweet smile from Mahatmaji and were quietly but peremptorily ordered to clear away. And he added as if in explanation of this apparent rudeness that it was a sin to stand there as the children would feel shy and lose their delight. This shows the man, and comments are superfluous.

Perhaps it may not be known to all that in the Ashrama prayer at dawn one of the daily items is the recitation of the nineteen verses of the Gita beginning from verse 53 of Chap. II to the end. And we may not be wrong if we infer that the ideal placed before the Ashrama is that of the man of steady wisdom which the Lord explains to Arjuna. It would be an idle speculation as to the measure of success attained by the Mahatma himself toward this ideal. But one can safely assert without any fear of contradiction that among all the public men of the world few could ever hope to reach the stage which he has attained.

No other great religions of the world is so absolutely impersonal as the Hindu religion. But it is also tragically true that at the present day the followers of this very religion are everywhere found worshipping personalities and ignoring the principles which they all lived and embodied. Hence we find that there are many in this country who would preach the Mahatma as an incarnation of the Divinity, literally worship his feet and shower gold and gems upon him but would not raise their little finger for the principles he would die for. We are not at all

suggesting that such things are bad in themselves, for it is but natural for man to pay his outward respect where such purity, love and renunciation are manifested, but the matter should not end there. For, after all such great men are nothing but the embodiments of the 'Time Spirit,' and it is by the spread of their principles among the masses is their mission fulfilled. We regard the Mahatma as this 'Time Spirit,' and it is the supreme duty of those who admire him and have faith in him, to do their best to live his ideals and principles in their daily life.

## GOD'S HAND.

### III

#### PROTECTING ANGELS.

When Von Asselt was sent to Sumatra, in the year 1856, he was the first European missionary to go among the wild Battaks. Twenty years prior two American missionaries had gone there, but they had been killed, and since then no effort had been made to preach among these people.

Von Asselt went alone. He was unable to make himself understood not knowing a single syllable of their language. But from their gestures and hostile looks it was only too evident that he was not welcome in their midst. However, trusting in God he stayed at his post, and before long his wife joined him. The first two years were years of terrible hardships, and it was only through prayer that they had the strength to continue their labour.

When they had lived in the same place for two years, they moved several hours' journey inland, among a tribe somewhat civilised, who received them more kindly. There they built a small house with three rooms, and life became a little more easy and cheerful.

When they had been in this new place for some months, a man came to them from the district where they had been, and whom they had known there. Von Asselt was sitting on a bench in front of his house, and the

visitor sat down beside him. For a while they talked of this, that and the other. Then the man said, "Now *Tuan* (teacher), I have a question to ask."

"And what is that?" said Von Asselt.

"I would like to know who are your watchmen."

"What watchmen do you mean? I have no watchmen."

"I mean the men whom you station around your house at night to protect you."

"But I have no watchmen," Von Asselt said again. "I have only a little herdboy and a little cook. They would make poor watchmen."

Then the visitor looked at him incredulously, as if he wished to say: "O, do not try to make me believe that, for I have seen them myself."

After a short silence the man said, "May I look through your house, to see if they are hid there?"

"Yes, certainly," Von Asselt said laughing. "You may look through the house. You will not find anybody." So he went in and searched everywhere, but, of course, found no one. He seemed very much disappointed and still incredulous.

Then Von Asselt curious to know what it all meant, asked the man to tell him about the watchmen of whom he spoke, and then he told the story.

"When you first came to us," the visitor said, "we were very angry at you. We did not want you to live among us, we did not trust you, and believed you had some design against us. Therefore we came together and resolved to kill you and your wife. Accordingly, we went to your house night after night, but when we came near, there always stood close around the house a double row of men with glittering weapons. So we did not dare to attack them to get into your house.

"Not willing to abandon our plan, we went to a professional assassin,\* and asked him if he would undertake

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\* There still was among the savage Battaks at that time a special guild of assassins who killed for hire any one whom it was desired to get out of the way.

to kill you and your wife. The assassin laughed at us because of our cowardice and said, 'I fear no one. I will get through those watchmen.' So we came all together one evening, and the assassin swinging his weapon over his head went on before us. As we neared your house, we remained behind and let him go on alone. But in a short time he came running back, and said, 'No, I dare not go through alone. Two rows of big, strong men stand there, close together, and their weapons shine like fire.' Then he gave it up to kill you. But, now, tell me, *Tuan*, who are those watchmen? Have you never seen them? "

Then Von Asselt told him that neither he nor his wife had ever seen them, that they did not know even that they were there, that these men were angels sent by God to protect him and his wife, that God had promised in His Word that He would take care of His children, and that He had shown them His angels that they also might believe and worship Him.

#### IV

##### THE CLOCK STRUCK THIRTEEN.

It was the midnight hour, in the town of Plymouth, many years ago, when two men stood close to the great clock of the town. The men were strangers and had not spoken. But when the clock struck the midnight hour one of them said, addressing the other, "Did you notice that the clock struck thirteen instead of twelve?" "Yes," the other replied, "I noticed it. It is strange indeed. I wonder how it happened!" The men then bade each other "Good night," and parted. One of these men was a gentleman by the name of Captain Jarvis.

It was not very long afterwards that this same Captain Jarvis awoke very early one morning, and feeling a strange restlessness, got up, dressed, and went down to the front door of his house. When he opened the door, what was his surprise to find his groom standing



there with his horse saddled and bridled, ready for him to mount.

"Why did you bring my horse without my order?" the Captain said. "It is yet very early."

"I had a strong feeling that you would be wanting your horse, Sir," the groom replied. "It seemed impossible for me to stay longer in my bed. It was as if some one urged me to get your horse ready and bring it to you."

The Captain was astonished and a little annoyed. But as it was a beautiful morning he mounted the horse and rode off. He had no special object in view, and he let his horse go wherever he chose. Down to the riverside they went, close to the spot where the ferryboat took passengers across. What, then, was the Captain's amazement when he saw the ferryman there, waiting with his boat to ferry him across at that early hour.

"How are you here so early, my man?" he inquired at once.

"I couldn't rest in my bed, Sir," the ferryman replied, "for I had a feeling that I was wanted to ferry some one across."

The Captain and horse both got into the boat, and were conveyed to the other side. Again the horse was given his own way as to where he should go. On and on they went, till at length they came to a large country town.

The Captain noticed some commotion in the town, and asked a passer-by if there was anything of interest going on.

"No, Sir," the passer-by replied, "nothing but the trial of a man for murder."

The Captain rode to the place where the trial was going on, dismounted, and entered the building. As he walked in, he heard the judge say, addressing the prisoner, "Have you anything to say for yourself? All the evidence is against you."

"I have nothing to say, Sir, except that I am an innocent man. I was far away from the place where the crime was committed. But there is only one man in all

the world who could prove it. I don't know that man's name, nor where he lives. At the time the murder is said to have taken place, we stood together in the town of Plymouth when it was midnight, and we both heard the great town clock strike thirteen, instead of twelve, and remarked it to each other. If he were here, he could speak for me, but, unless God intervenes, my case is hopeless, as I cannot get him."

The Captain hearing this was thunder-struck. "I am here! I am here!" he shouted. "I was the man who stood at midnight beside the great Plymouth clock and heard it strike thirteen, instead of twelve. What the prisoner says is absolutely true. I identify him as the man. On the night of the murder, at the very time it was committed, that man was with me, at Plymouth, and we remarked to each other how remarkable it was that the clock should strike thirteen at the midnight hour."

The condemned man was thus proved innocent, and was at once set free. God's hand had saved him.

S. A.

## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from p. 514.)

योऽसौ गुणक्षोभकृतो विकारः प्रधान मूलान्महतः प्रसूतः ॥

अहं त्रिवृन्मोहविकल्पहेतुर्वैकारिकस्तामस ऐन्द्रियश्च ॥ ३२ ॥

32. This modification, due to God<sup>1</sup> who upsets the equilibrium of the Gunas, produced from the Mahat which, again, has for its cause the Prakriti, is known as egoism. It is threefold—Vaikarika,<sup>2</sup> Tamasa and Aindriya—and is the cause of doubt characterised by ignorance.

[1 God—as the operative cause.

<sup>2</sup> *Vaikarika* &c.—the same as Sattvika, Tamasa and Rajasa, representing the divisions of Adhidaiva, Adhibhuta and Adhyatma respectively.

One must realise the Atman by rooting out Egoism—this is the suggestion of this and the next verse.]

आत्मापरिज्ञानमयो विवादो ह्यस्तीति नास्तीति भिदार्थनिष्ठः ॥  
व्यर्थोऽपि नैवोपरमेत पुंसां मत्तः परावृत्तधियां स्वलोकात् ॥३३॥

33. The dispute as to whether the Atman is or is not, hinges on a difference of views merely, and is due to the non-perception of the Atman. Even though it is baseless, it never ceases<sup>1</sup> for men who are averse to Me, their own self.

[1 *Never ceases*—and creates an endless round of births and deaths.]

उद्धव उवाच ॥

त्वत्तः परावृत्तधियः स्वकृतैः कर्मभिः प्रभो ॥

उच्चावचान्यथा देहान्गृह्णन्ति विसृजन्ति च ॥ ३४ ॥

तन्ममाख्याहि गोविन्द दुर्विभाव्यमनात्मभिः ॥

नह्येतत्प्रायशो लोके विद्वांसः सन्ति वञ्चिताः ॥ ३५ ॥

Uddhava said :

34-35. Tell me, O Lord, O Govinda, how<sup>1</sup> men averse to Thee obtain and give up, through their own actions, bodies high and low. It is inscrutable for those who are addicted to the senses. Few are the men who know it in the world,—the majority are deluded.

[1 *How &c.*—He asks about transmigration.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच ॥

मनः कर्ममयं नृणामिन्द्रियैः पञ्चभिर्युतम् ॥

लोकाल्लोकं प्रयात्यन्य आत्मा तदनुवर्तते ॥ ३६ ॥

The Lord said :

36. The mind<sup>1</sup> of man, swayed by past work, goes from one sphere to another, accompanied by the five<sup>2</sup> organs. The Atman, which is distinct from it, follows<sup>3</sup> it.

[1 *Mind &c.*—The whole thing, says the Lord, is due to the "subtle body."

<sup>2</sup> *Five*—implies all the ten.

<sup>3</sup> *Follows*—through identification.]

ध्यायन्मनोऽनुविषयाद्दृष्टान्वानुश्रुतानथ ॥

उद्यत्सीदत्कर्मतन्त्रं स्मृतिस्तदनुशाम्यति ॥ ३७ ॥

37. The mind swayed by past work, as it dwells on sense-objects experienced or heard of, flashes<sup>1</sup> up with regard to these and sleeps over the past. After this memory is lost.

[1 *Flashes &c.*—It is all a question of memory. The new body is remembered and the old forgotten. The centre of identification is thus changed.]

विषयामिनिवेशेन नात्मानं यत्स्मरेत्पुनः ॥

जन्तोर्वैकस्यचिद्धेतोर्मृत्युरत्यन्तविस्मृतिः ॥ ३८ ॥

38. Being engrossed in a particular sense-object,<sup>1</sup> man no more recollects himself. This utter self-forgetfulness of man, from any cause,<sup>2</sup> is verily his death.

[1 *Sense-object*—the new body produced by past work. So also in the next verse.

2 *Any cause*—either the intense enjoyment of an angelic body or the extreme pain of a low body undergoing tortures.]

जन्म त्वात्मतया पुंसः सर्वभावेन भूरिद ॥

विषयस्वीकृतिं प्रादुर्यथा स्वप्नमनोरथः ॥ ३९ ॥

39. O generous one, the acceptance<sup>1</sup> by a man of a particular sense-object completely as himself is called his birth—as in the case of dream and imagination.

[1 *Acceptance &c.*—It is all due to identification.]

स्वप्नं मनोरथं चैतथं प्राक्तनं न स्मरत्यसौ ॥

तत्र पूर्वमिवात्मानमपूर्वं चानुपश्यति ॥ ४० ॥

40. In a similar way, he no more remembers the old dream<sup>1</sup> and imagination. In the new experience he considers his old self as just come into being.

[1 *Dream &c.*—of the body.]

इन्द्रियायनसृष्टयेदं त्रैविध्यं भाति वस्तुनि ॥

बहिरन्तर्भिदाहेतुर्जनोऽसज्जनकृद्यथा ॥ ४१ ॥

41. As a man creates phantom bodies in a dream, so this threefold division<sup>1</sup> which is the creation of mind appears in the Atman, which becomes<sup>2</sup> the cause of the division of interior and exterior.

[<sup>1</sup> *Division*—into Adhidaiva, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Becomes &c.*—in this instance, through identification. The man has subjective and objective experiences, that is.]

नित्यदा ह्यङ्ग भूतानि भवन्ति न भवन्ति च ॥

कालेनालक्ष्यवेगेन सूक्ष्मत्वात्तन्न दृश्यते ॥ ४२ ॥

42. My friend, through the imperceptible march of Time creatures are being continually born and dying. But this is not observed because of its subtlety.

[The Lord refers unasked to this constant molecular change in the body to stimulate a spirit of dispassion.]

(To be continued.)

## REPORTS AND APPEALS.

### THE THIRD GENERAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FOR THE YEARS 1917-1922.

The above report contains a general survey of the activities in which the Mission has been engaged during the aforesaid years. The works of the Mission may be classified under three general heads : (1) *Missionary work*, including specially preaching and publication of religious literature ; (2) *Philanthropic work* ; (3) *Educational work*.

The missionary work has been done from the Maths and Ashramas where the members by living a life of practical spirituality and holding occasional classes, conversazioni and lectures directly or indirectly do preaching work. There are altogether 17 such institutions in India and 4 outside India. Under the second head fall all those activities of the Mission which go to ameliorate the physical sufferings of the people, giving relief in times of famine, flood and other scourges of nature and establishing dispensaries, nursing homes and the like. Temporary

relief works on the occasion of providential mishaps are generally organised from the head quarters of the Mission at Belur, and 19 such relief works have been done during the years under review in Bengal, Behar, United Provinces, Assam and Burma. There are altogether 12 permanent philanthropic centres affiliated to the Mission in various parts of India as well as Burma. Under the educational work come all those activities which are concerned with spreading education among the people, and they include the conducting of industrial schools, orphanages, residential schools and boarding houses for boys and girls. The report mentions the names of 10 such affiliated institutions besides those which are likely to be affiliated soon.

The appendix contains the summary of the Provident Fund account year by year, which was published in detail from time to time as occasions demanded. From a cursory glance at the names of those who contributed to the Mission fund, we find that though the Mission has got friends and sympathisers throughout the length and breadth of the country, its activities are mainly confined to a few provinces in India. We know that wherever a centre of the Mission has been started, it has originally grown out of the nucleus formed by the interested local people. So it is hoped that our friends of the unrepresented provinces will show a keener interest in the activity of the Mission by locally organising such works.

#### THE FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON, FOR THE YEAR 1924.

Within the short period of four years this institution seems to have grown in great usefulness as is shown by the report of its work under review. In the Indoor Hospital altogether 1,113 patients were treated, whereas in the Outdoor Hospital as many as 48,355 cases were attended to in the year. The total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 25,274-14-3, including the balance of the previous year, and the expenditure came up to Rs. 23,291-9-3.

The Sevashrama is, however, labouring under a great disadvantage owing to a great financial burden as indicated by the outstanding loan of Rs. 8,500 at the end of the year. In view of the fact that this institution renders help to suffering humanity irrespective of caste, creed or nationality, it deserves the sympathy of all generous people, so that the financial handicap may soon be removed.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA  
MISSION BRANCH CENTRE, DACCA, FOR THE YEAR 1924.

This centre is engaged in useful works of various kinds. In the year under review, it conducted as many as 332 religious classes in different parts of the town and in the Mission house. In the Free School started and maintained by it boys of the locality get free elementary education, and there were altogether 89 boys in the roll at the end of the year. It has got a small Charitable Dispensary, in the outdoor department of which 3,379 cases were attended to, and the indoor department treated 20 patients.

This Mission centre also extended its activities outside the area of the town and sent relief parties to work in villages during epidemics in the districts of Dacca, Mymensingh and Sylhet. We wish the institution all success.

THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA, BALIATI, DACCA.

This Ashrama was started in 1910 and has since been conducting a Free Primary School for boys, another for girls and a Tol for Sanskrit study. It has also a Charitable Dispensary attached to it and undertook some temporary relief works. We thank the organisers of this Ashrama for the silent work of help and service they are doing.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA  
SOCIETY, CALCUTTA, FOR 1924.

This Society was started by some enthusiastic members of the Calcutta public in 1923 with Srimat Swami

Abhedananda as its President to organise various works of public utility. During the year, as many as 150 religious classes were held, and in the industrial department, teaching various vocational arts, there were altogether 20 boys on the roll. The Society has extended its activities by starting branch centres at Darjeeling and Hajigunj (Comilla). At the latter place an M. E. School is being maintained with 80 boys on the roll. The Society has proved useful in various other ways.

THE MATRI MANDIR, JAYRAMBATI, BANKURA. ✓

Jayrambati is an out of the way village in the district of Bankura, sanctified by the birth of the Holy Mother. The locality is generally infested with malaria, and the people are extremely backward in education. So the above Ashrama has been conducting a Charitable Dispensary, a Vidyapith teaching up to the Upper Primary Standard and a Night School for the benefit of the local people. But as the unostentatious works in a remote village fail to draw the attention of the wider public, the Ashrama has been struggling for funds to widen the scope of its activities which are so needful. Any contribution in the shape of money, medicine etc. will be thankfully received by Srimat Swami Saradananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, 1 Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

Besides, we are glad to receive the Reports of the following philanthropic institutions which also are doing much useful work in various ways :

- (1) The Ramakrishna Seva-Samity, Sylhet.
  - (2) The Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Chittagong.
  - (3) The Ramakrishna Seva-Samity, Kalma, Dacca.
  - (4) The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Narayangunj, Dacca.
  - (5) The Ramakrishna Mission Branch Centre, Sonargaon, Dacca.
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## NEWS AND NOTES.

### ON SIR J. C. BOSE'S RESEARCHES.

The latest developments in the researches in plant-physiology which Sir J. C. Bose has been carrying on for the last quarter of a century in his laboratories, almost uncontestedly establish the truth of the uniformity of life between animals and plants. What exactly is meant by 'uniformity of life'? Life in common parlance is very loosely used for the Self (Atman) as well as for those finer actions and reactions or sensibilities which we find closely associated with the ego. In Indian philosophy and religion a fundamental difference is recognised between these aspects. Thus take the feelings of sorrow and gladness, sleep and wakefulness, pain and suffering. All these (as distinguished from, say, blood circulation or digestion) we generally consider to be signs of the existence of Life or Self. Philosophically and strictly speaking, they are nothing of the kind. They do not prove the existence of the Self. That which you can handle with and know through material instruments can only be material. Those feelings or sensibilities only *appear* as endowed with consciousness, or as manifestations of it, being in fact mere actions and reactions of matter in its subtler form. As the Gita tersely puts it: "All actions are wrought by the qualities of Nature only. The self, deluded by egoism, thinketh, 'I am the doer'." Thus the uniformity of life which the great scientist proves is not the uniform existence of the Atman or Self-consciousness in plants and animals, but only the identity and uniformity of their subtler actions and reactions which, like any other material phenomena, are capable of being handled and demonstrated in a laboratory. And inferentially he proves the truth of the Vedantic conception of *neti neti Atma*, i.e., this Atman is neither the senses, nor the desires, the mind, the ego or the Buddhi, but is beyond whatever is predicated of It.

However, till Sir Jagadish made his discoveries known, even this uniformity of animals and plants was not recognised. They were supposed to represent two streams of life having nothing in common, the one restless and responsive with reflex movements and pulsating organs, and the other seemingly passive and irresponsible. The plant, it was considered, has no muscular tissue or nerve. But the results obtained in his laboratory prove that the plant is not a mere mass of vegetative growth, but that its every part is instinct with sensibility. We are able to record (with instruments constructed by Indian craftsmen under Sir J. C. Bose's direction, which are marvels of human ingenuity and accurate precision) the throbbings of its pulsating life, and find them wax and wane according to the life conditions of the plant and cease with its death. We find the different parts of the plant linked together by nervous threads, so that the tremor of excitation initiated at one place courses through the whole. In these and many other ways, the life-actions of the plant and man are alike. Thus is proved again through the cold mechanism of science what became patent to the intuitive vision of India's seers thousands of years ago, that all life is one and is governed by identical laws.

This synthetic vision is India's peculiar gift to the fund of world's knowledge. In all departments of her life and activity, this has been her one unceasing effort,—the discovery of the underlying unity of apparently conflicting and unrelated phenomena. And so it is not mere coincidence that her greatest scientist to-day is striving after the same synthetic realisation in the realms of the Western science and has achieved such a conspicuous success. This success has been due not a little to his following India's ancient method of knowledge, which is concentration and self-control. This has been declared to be the direct pathway to the heart of things. Before the concentrated gaze of a purified mind, things reveal their inner secrets. Hence it is that not only the philosophers and religious teachers, but also the teachers of such secular

knowledge as astronomy or medicine, are looked upon as Rishis or seers. A Hindu boy enters the student life with *initiation into the process of concentration and meditation*. What a contrast to the Western method of education, which is primarily based on observation and experience ! Not that the latter method is futile. They are rather complementary. As Sir J. C. Bose himself observes in course of his recent address at Darjeeling :

“What is the specific gift which India offers for the advancement of knowledge ? It is first in the training of mind by habits of concentration after years of discipline ; the mind then apprehends truth almost instinctively. The second is the gift of great imagination held in check by wisdom. Our mind is the true laboratory where every step of the experiment has first to be visualised and afterwards verified by instruments of surpassing sensitiveness and accuracy. In order to discover the invisible mechanism in the interior of the tree, one has to become the tree and feel the pulsation of its beating heart. It is then necessary to get access to the smallest unit of life, the ‘life atom,’ and record its throbbing pulsations. When microscopic vision fails, we have still to follow the invisible. Every layer in the hidden interior of the tree has to be explored by means of the Electric Probe invented for the purpose. It is then only that we realise the ineffable wonder that has hitherto been hidden from us. For the little we can see is nothing compared with the vastness of that which we cannot. Out of the very imperfection of our senses we have to build a raft of thought to make daring adventures on the great seas of the unknown. I am glad that the importance of the Indian method is being appreciated in the West. ‘The Times,’ in a leading article, speaks of the work pursued in my Institute as the fertile union of the introspective method of the East with the experimental method of the Western science. It proceeds to say in regard to the work carried out by the speaker that ‘whilst we in Europe were still steeped in imperialism, the subtle Eastern had swept the whole universe into a synthesis and had seen the one in all its changing manifestations.’ The

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greatest contribution to knowledge would be made when the East and the West can unite their genius for common benefit of humanity."

This happy union, we are glad to note, has been already realised considerably in the Institute which Sir J. C. Bose founded some years ago, and we unite ourselves with him in his fervent prayer for the fulfilment of its glorious future. "In founding my Institute seven years ago, I hoped to be able to revive the great traditions of my country, which so far back as twenty-five centuries ago, welcomed all scholars from different parts of the world, within the precincts of its ancient seats of learning at Nalanda and at Taxilla. That dream is coming true, for applications have been received from Professors and Post-graduate Scholars from the West, for being enrolled in my Institute to receive special training in the new methods initiated in India for the advancement of world's knowledge. I may still live to see the fulfilment of my dream, the foundation of a true International University."

May his dream come true !

ON THE BRINK OF A PRECIPICE.

Men who have climbed mountains and have seen huge precipices, alone can guess what a slip of the foot would mean from such stupendous heights. And one could better imagine than describe what the fate would be of a fully intoxicated man venturing to tread those narrow paths over the staggering heights.

Intoxicated with the false ideas of nationalism and patriotism, Europe has been marching through the course of centuries with banners afloat in the name of culture and civilisation. With the power of her dollar and machine, she has been conquering peoples and exterminating races throughout the world. This mad rush after materialism and commercialism reacted on her own self, and the result of this organised brute force was seen in the great European tragedy of 1914-1919. Still she has not, it would seem, learnt her lesson. Still, her race-pride

and race-hatred, the basis of all her nationalism and patriotism, seem not dead. And this state of things threatens the civilisation which she has been building up during the past centuries. This civilisation is essentially materialistic. The science it developed always marched with a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other.

With the growing idea of a narrow nationalism, suspicion and jealousy have grown among the peoples of Europe, and instead of creating one humanity and one Christian brotherhood, it has tended to make the gulf between man and man wider and wider. And science has helped the politician in his suicidal ambitions. The Western nations have not yet realised that war cannot end war. In spite of the terrible sufferings undergone they have not yet realised with Lord Haldane that an army organised for keeping peace cannot keep peace. They have not realised that until they stop their mad rush after this pelf and power there cannot be peace. "He who raises the sword shall perish by the sword." It would look as if this is coming to pass in the near future.

An interesting article on "The Future of Warfare: Western and Eastern possibilities," in the New Orient by Lieut. Commander Kenworthy, M.P., gives us some idea of the preparations that are going on behind the League of Nations, the Courts of Arbitrations and Treaties of Mutual Assistance. Britain is busy in her naval dockyards, building her Nelson and Rodnez, the new battle-ships which are to cost her about ten to twelve crores of rupees each. France, Italy, Germany, Japan and America are not behind Great Britain in building cruisers. Lieut. Kenworthy points out that most deadly weapons are being made in the laboratories of chemists and physicists, and the next war in its destructiveness would absolutely dwarf the last great war. These are the days of the wireless, and the aeroplane would be able to cause devastation and havoc by the use of various kinds of bombs laden with fatal gas and disease germs, being operated by the wireless. The result would be that the peace-loving population will be assailed.

In the days of the Mahabharata, for that matter, even in later historical times, the Indian warfare never allowed the tiller of the soil, or the woman or the child to be murdered in the name of war. The Kshatriya Dharma requires men to fight only with their equals. Even Ravana, the story goes, in his fight with Sri Ramachandra stopped fighting once when Sri Ramachandra was uncharioted and even offered a chariot to his opponent before starting the fight again. But what could such moral codes have for a civilisation which holds, "All is fair in love and war"?

If the terrible possibilities pointed out by the writer are to become real, even in a partial measure, who can deny that the Western civilisation is on the brink of a precipice?

THE PROBLEM OF ALL PROBLEMS.

A great problem which is seriously facing all who have got the good of the country at heart, is the slow and gradual deterioration of the health of our student community. The Welfare Committee formed by the Calcutta University, on examining about a thousand students of Bengal, found that 60 p.c. of them had defective health. The case is no better in other provinces. The sunken eyes and weak, emaciated figures are the general characteristics of the majority of students. It is but natural, with such a poor resource of health, our young men will find themselves totally handicapped in the struggle of life—not to speak of their helplessness in the desire of fulfilling any higher ambition. When they go out into the world, they invariably seek some easy life of routine work, where no initiative is necessary and where they will not have to face much adverse circumstances. All their higher ambitions and idealism are frozen by the first touch of the cold reality of the world, and they count the days only to see the end of their miserable life, as they deem it. This state of things speaks but poorly of the future of our nation, and those who want to build a national fabric,

without remedying these defects, may as well hope to build a castle on quicksands.

The cause of this is not only the poor economic condition of our middle class people, as some are apt to suppose, but many other causes have combined to worsen the situation. The University examination, where a few hours' work determines the result of the whole year's labour and which to a great extent influences the future career of their life, costs the health and life of many of our students. From all quarters, our young men get a strong urge to cultivate their intellect, but no encouragement to develop their manliness. This makes them greatly timid and powerless, so much so that in their after-life they find it impossible even to protect their hearth and home in the hour of sore need. Then many of our students do not know the ordinary laws of hygiene, and a large number carelessly break them led by a kind of false philosophy that the body needs not much care. However dark may be the situation and however gloomy the future, we cannot deny that much of the responsibility lies with ourselves, and the situation can be greatly improved, if we put our best foot foremost. There are some factors over which we have no control, and until they are remedied, the students and their guardians should try to do what can be done in the matter. What is needed most is to create a strong public opinion, so that all concerned may be more particular about the health of our students.

The Calcutta University is to be congratulated on its having taken up the problem in right earnest. For some-time past it has been examining the health of the students to find out a solution, and recently the Senate by a resolution has made physical exercise binding upon the students. But mere compulsion in this matter will not help much ; for, when the students take to physical exercise as a matter of compulsion and not from a strong desire within to improve their health, much of the effect is sure to be lost.

UNDER WHICH FLAG?

Any one who reads through the legal columns of a daily newspaper can find that cases of moral delinquency are increasing in the world. Even in India cases of kidnapping and abduction, assault and rape, enticement and seduction are becoming more common than before. We are tempted to ask whether we are really advancing in civilisation or going back to a stage worse than savagery. For, as Havelock Ellis observes, some of the savages of African are more chaste than the Europeans.

The large number of divorce suits, sensationalisms and matters of the like kind that the English dailies are forced to provide to satisfy their readers and the mass evidence produced before the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, ought to be an eye-opener for those who run after everything of the West. We shall not be far wrong in characterising this state of things as the inevitable consequences of a purely materialistic outlook on life. Nevertheless, reformers are not wanting in India who wish that our society should be modelled according to the European pattern.

We by no means depreciate the entire civilisation of the West. We believe that a happy union between the East and West is quite possible and desirable as well. Each will have to be enriched by a policy of give and take. A purely ascetic ideal is not for the ordinary run of humanity ; and in this world of activity a bit of worldliness is necessary. Some seem to think that the Indian outlook on life, at least in ancient times, was other-worldly, and this outlook is responsible for the present degeneration of India. This view shows a lack of historical knowledge. India's fall is rather to be attributed to her deviation from the true ideals of her own. Her miserable position is due to the fact that she refused to share with others what was valuable in her own. She buried herself in isolation with a contempt for the Mlechchas, instead of sowing broadcast the truths of Vedanta, she kept it under lock and key and thus brought ruin on herself.

The present contact of India with the West has, however, brought her into the vortex of the world's struggles and interests. She has been roused from her age-long slumber. As one just got out of bed she does not see the way before her clearly. Divided counsels and want of resolution are the two dangers threatening her progress and advancement. She has a great mission to fulfil, namely, to prove to the world that permanent peace and happiness is possible only upon a recognition of the supremacy of the spiritual interests of humanity.

She has naturally a double duty to perform. She has to bring out the treasure of the Vedanta philosophy and scatter them broadcast amongst all the sons of India irrespective of caste, colour or creed. Also she has to send out the best representatives of her spiritual culture to the West and help them avert the menace of Mammon worship which is threatening her with extinction.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY.

The *Tithi* of Swami Vivekananda's sixty-fourth nativity falls on 6th January, 1926. We hope all public and private bodies celebrating this birthday will kindly send us their reports at an early date.



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